

PLAYSTATION PLUS

new!

AN INDEPENDENT PUBLICATION

ALIEN TRILOGY

**Acclaim go
to war...**

PLUS

- ASSAULT RIGS
- ESPN EXTREME
- GAMES
- WORMS

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please ask your
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THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO THE SONY PLAYSTATION, AND MORE...



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As you probably know,

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Drill was born with an excellent nose
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'GAME OVER MAN, GAME OVER...: 14

Alien Trilogy is quite simply one of the most anticipated games ever. Using motion capture techniques to recreate the acid-blooded beasts which have terrorised movie-goers since 1979, Acclaim have dropped them into a stunning *Doom* clone. *PlayStation Plus* is here with the definitive look at this stunning title, while taking a detailed look at the world according to Giger's lethal piston-jawed killers.

MORTAL BELOVED: 48

The *Mortal Kombat* series of games reaches its third instalment as Sony unveil the first 32bit incarnation of Midway's coin-op classic. With a film and countless memorabilia opportunities in the offing, *PlayStation Plus* explodes the *Mortal* myth.

DOOM: 104

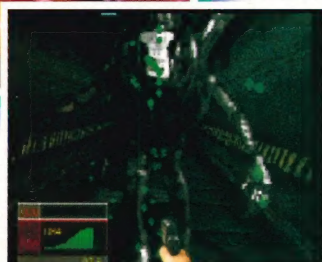
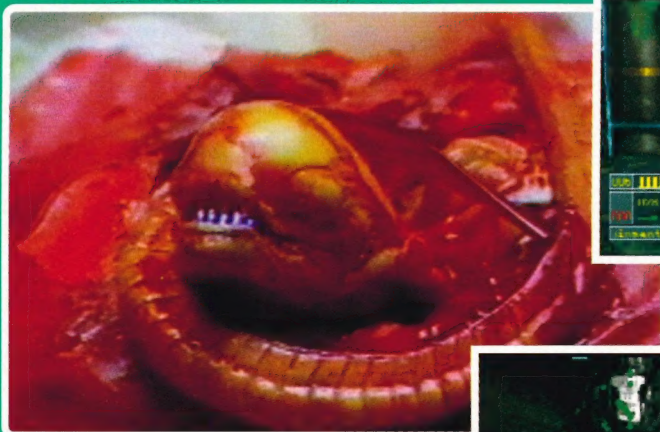
A game owned by virtually every PC owner on the planet, *Doom* has been turbo-charged for its imminent PlayStation release. Meet the programmers behind this unique experience, and then journey into the newly light-sourced catacombs with us.

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NEWS



PLAYSTATION ARRIVES WITH A BANG!



ever before had there been a launch like it. The PlayStation hype started during the otherwise unremarkable Live '95 show, though, with an actor's prosthetic head exploding in a shower of sparks mimicking the same image used on Sony's pre-launch flyers.

However, on Friday 29th of September, Sony finally did the decent thing and unleashed the PAL version of the PlayStation on to the UK's retailers. With most shops knocking a tenner off its price to a mere £289.99, the PlayStation Plus office was almost immediately inundated with calls from retailers telling us of how they managed to unload their full stocks over the weekend, whilst Future Zone's offer to give Saturn owners a PlayStation for £99 in exchange for their Sega machine also converted more than a handful of people.

With all this going on, Sony also took the chance to unveil their TV ad campaign on the same day, using a very Fifties retro feel, with a member of the S.A.P.S (Society Against PlayStation) urging viewers to steer well clear of the grey 'bagel toaster' for fear of adding their brains — a familiar ironic style of ad, but one that went down well in the break in Friday 28th's edition of *Coronation Street*. Sony are going for the Saturn with their corporate teeth, also planning an ad campaign with the Sega magazines containing a message from S.A.P.S congratulating Saturn owners on buying a machine which they won't use enough to corrupt their young minds!

Other launch successes include Sony Interactive Entertainment's (formerly Psygnosis) *WipeOut* release which, according to unconfirmed reports, was the game most purchasers were buying alongside their machine. And all this even before *Tekken* hits the PAL PlayStation users...



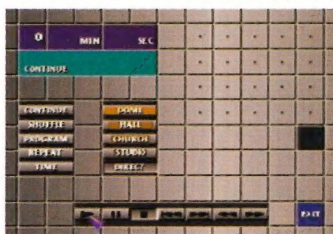
AND STILL THE HYPE CONTINUED...

With PlayStation's firmly ensconced in the Ministry of Sound, Sony's assault on the celebrity scene continued apace. The style observers were inundated with pictures of Damon and his Blur chums giving it a go, while Prince Hamed Naseem is now the proud owner of a machine and a series of clobber sporting the PS logo. In the meantime, the S.A.P.S logo has spread like a rash, with graffiti logos appearing all over the city — including on EMAP Images' (home of PlayStation Plus) front step...



THE NEW DESKTOP: WHY?

If the PlayStation is booted without a CD, a CD controller screen appears, allowing the user to play audio CDs via the desktop. On the Japanese systems, this screen was a rather attractive 'blue wash', with the assorted CD control icons represented by shaded spheres. The UK machine, however, boots up to reveal a rather drab tiled pattern reminiscent of a hospital's sterile room and hardly the sort of thing you expect to see gracing the front-end of the 'console of the future.' Apparently, the front end was designed specifically for the UK by the Japanese themselves and is what they thought we'd appreciate. Gee, thanks. Goes to show how tasteful we are, then...



NOVEMBER RELEASES

And the torrent of new releases continues...

ASSAULT RIGS

Psygnosis. Large tanks blow seven shades out of each other within a 3D arena.



Reviewed page 56.

ESPN EXTREME GAMES

Sony. Sports lunacy as Sony invite the player to risk life and limb skate boarding down busy roads, etc.

Reviewed page 70.

KRAZY IVAN

Psygnosis. More blasting action — avec robots, this time.



MYST

Sony. Point 'n' click mystery/adventure. Appeared on every format known to man, but a bit bobbins.

STARBLADE ALPHA

Namco. Duel-version conversion of the uninspired coin-op — one with fancy graphics, the other a straight port.

TEKKEN

Namco. Quite simply the greatest PlayStation title to date. A breath of fresh air in the world of stale fighting games.



WARHAWK

Sony. Impressive 3D shoot 'em up. Similar to Agile Warrior.

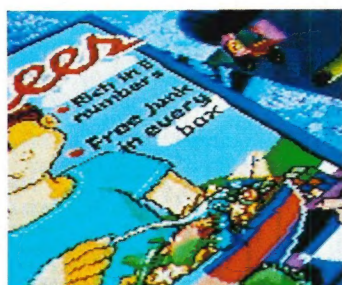
LITTLE THIRD PARTY SUPPORT

With the PlayStation's release date set in concrete a month or so ago, it was still a little quiet on the third-party software front. As the 29th came and went, the only non-Sony titles were the Acclaim duo, *NBA Jam* and *Street Fighter: The Movie* — the latter of which is so poor, it was soon bundled with the machine by a couple of major retailers! The next third-party then arrived a week or so later, as a delayed *Rayman* finally hit the shelves courtesy of UBI Soft. By far, the greatest success on the day, though, was SIE's *WipeOut* which, according to some sources, outsold Sony's *Ridge Racer* conversion on a 3:1 basis.



MICRO MACHINES

One of the best-selling Megadrive games of all time, Codemasters' *Micro Machines* is undergoing a massive revamp for release on the PlayStation. Under the tentative name of *Micro Machines: The Next Generation*, the 16bit game coder, Andrew Graham, aims to retain the basic playability of the first game, but replace the old 2D view with a 3D view and multiple camera views. For the uninitiated, *Micro Machines* are tiny toy cars, and the game places the player behind the wheel of a number of mini-vehicles as they race across courses made up of comparatively huge everyday objects. A January release date has been provisionally set.



CITY OF THE LOST CHILDREN

Developed by SIE's French division, *City of the Lost Children* is a stunning-looking arcade/adventure set in a post-industrial universe made up of brown cities, small alleyways and, culminating on a rescue mission aboard a rusting oil rig. *City* is being developed alongside Marc Caro, the co-author of *Delicatessen* and a is based on his recent film, and the final code will feature 100 rooms, an assortment of characters to interact with, and a plot which sees our heroes — a burly man and a young girl — battling against a wizened villain called Krank, who has been stealing children in order to replace the dreams he cannot have. Apparently, Krank is aging before his time, and consequently needs the fertile imaginations of children to supplement his failing mind. Scheduled for release in the summer, we're eagerly awaiting this stunning-looking game.



TESTED

On trial: The Hyper Joypad, and the PlayStation Joypad. Both feature Turbo and Slow buttons, both £24.99 from Fire International Ltd. Contact: 01302 751428.

HYPER JOYPAD



PLAYSTATION JOYPAD



REVERTHION

What exactly 'Reverthion' means is anyone's guess, but the game itself couldn't be more straight forward. *Reverthion* is a one-on-one beat 'em up where Manga-style characters battle it out in arenas so bizarre they'd make Salvador Dali feel at home. There are eight combatants in all, and each of them has the power to transform into a fantastic mythical creature which can pull off some equally fantastic special moves. The arenas range from the cramped to the vast, with each character having one that suits them best. There's even one arena under water, ideal for its proprietor, who turns into a fish!

TEKKEN

Hmm, not too bad. The buttons feel a bit squashy, but do seem to respond okay. The D-pad is probably the weakest element of this pad, quite often initiating jumps when you execute multiple movement (eg: left, left, left). The Slow button does it's job (for what it's worth) while the Turbo serves no particular purpose here.

★★★★★

RAIDEN

A fairly basic game to test it with, but things seem fine. Once again, there's no real point to the Turbo button as the game has one anyway, and though the Slow button does indeed drag everything down to a crawl, it also makes the music freak out and the sound FX sod up. Yeah, pretty good.

★★★★★

ASSAULT RIGS

A bit of a problem here. Someone has either missed something in design, or my sample was faulty, because the L1 (which should side-step) has become L2 (weapon select) even though R1 remains as before. Apart from scrambling the brain, it doesn't exactly bode well for other games using L1, L2, R1, and R2.

★★★★★

Considering the weird layout of this pad, it works surprisingly well. This will only be true for people who can play with fingers rather than thumbs (if you know what I mean) but it's actually easier to put rapid straight combos together with this than the normal pad. The buttons, unfortunately, are somewhat loose and 'rattly'.

★★★★★

Everything's in order here, with the D-pad holding up very nicely, and the buttons doing their job. The only difference here is that the second button (for bombs) is right under your thumb, which makes it slightly easier to hit. And that's it.

★★★★★

This is the first game to show the danger of moving buttons. Whereas the side-step button were originally the top L1 and R1, they now move to part of the main six button area. To be honest, it doesn't work. You can no longer instinctively dodge, and a big element of the control is lost. Everything else is okay.

★★★★★

VIRGIN GET DARKSTALKERS

Following the 'Coming Soon' supplement last month, is news that Virgin have stepped in to acquire the rights to Capcom's *DarkStalkers* conversion. The Kensington-based company has taken delivery of the first version of code, which contains four playable characters — Demitri, Gallon, Zabelzarock, and Morrigan — although very few of their special moves have been implemented. Similarly, the bouts are restricted to one bout, and only two of the same character can fight. First impressions are favourable, with the sprites remaining true to the coin-op, but guaranteed to catch anyone's attention is the musical extravaganza which precedes the options screen. Each of the characters is introduced via a mini opus as a Def Leppard sound-alike sings that there's 'Gonna Be Trouble' and how he's 'The Trouble Man'. Hmmm. *DarkStalkers* has yet to appear on a Virgin release schedule along with their other Capcom acquisition, *Bio-Hazard* — although this hasn't stopped one magazine reviewing this hugely incomplete code...



OVERALL

My first impressions of the Hyper Joypad were that it all feels a bit limp and 'squashy'. The D-pad's accuracy is not all that, and the buttons seem to take a fair bit of pressure. Not too bad, but not great.

★★★★★

The PSX pad hasn't turned out to be as bad as I thought it would. Though it takes getting used to the button layout, things work okay, and the D-pad is nice and accurate. I do, however, fear for games that use the L1, L2 finger buttons, as it's no longer as instinctive.

★★★★★

ENDORFUN "CHANGING PEOPLES FEELINGS" OUTRAGE

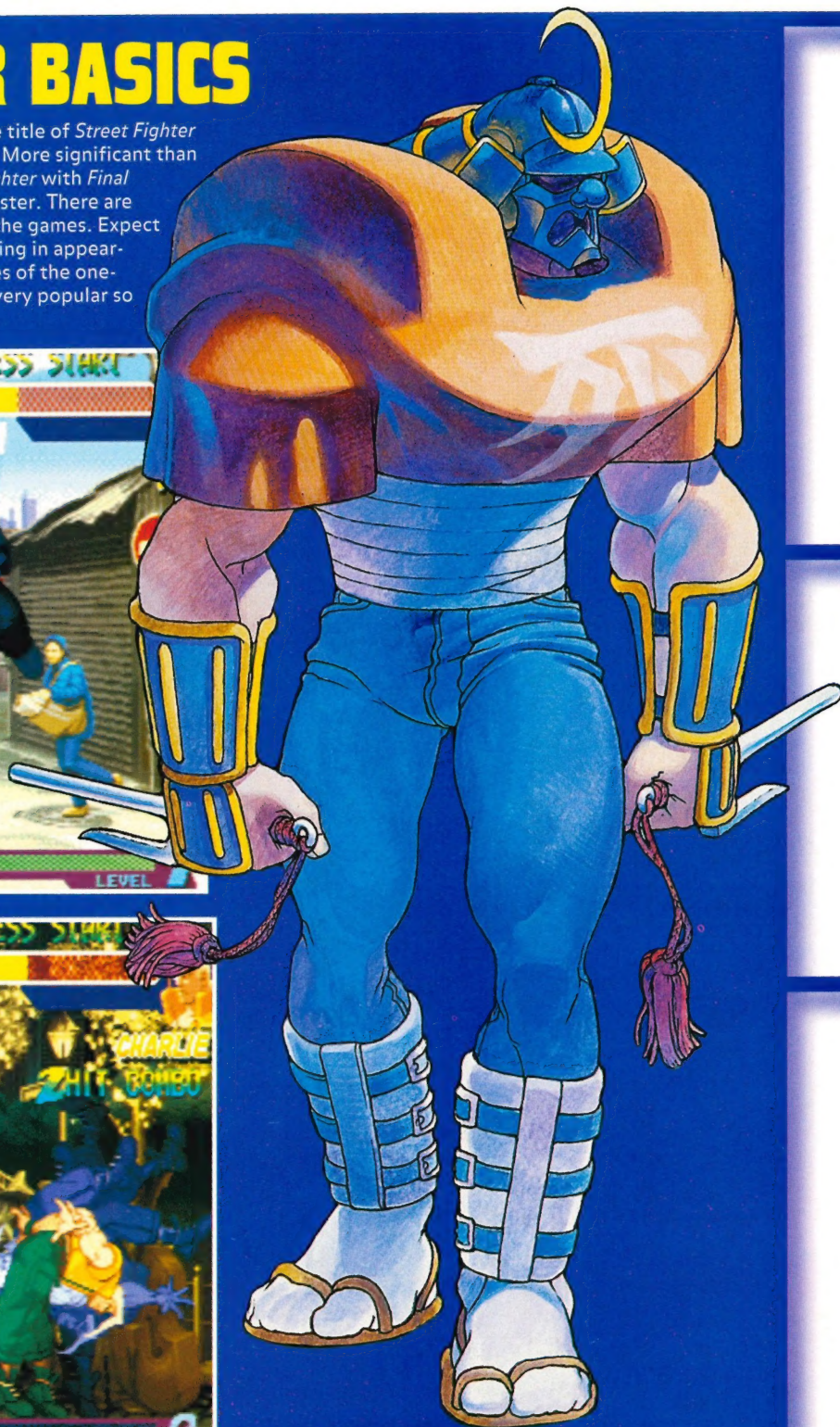
THE SUNDAYTIMES

Time Warner have incurred the wrath of 'moral guardians' with the PC release of their forthcoming PlayStation puzzler, *Endorfun*. Similar in style to the Rubik's Cube puzzle, *Endorfun* gives the player control of a tumbling cube, with six colours gracing its sides. The basic aim of the game is to position these coloured faces on similarly-coloured squares on a huge grid. The reason "parents, politicians and psychologists" are alarmed, though, is that the game boasts "subliminal messages" telling the player they "expect pleasure and satisfaction" and "it's okay for them to have everything they want". Subliminal messages are banned from being used on radio or television, but games fall out of the jurisdiction. In their research, *The Sunday Times* tested nine children to see if they became hooked, and quotes ranged from how they felt "in a trance" and "very relaxed." As can be expected, a Tory MP, David Shaw, has called for *Endorfun* to be banned, stating Time Warner should scrap the game as they are 'changing peoples' feelings.' We rang Time Warner for a quote, but all they said was "we will take over the world haha, we will take over the world..."

Messages

STREET FIGHTER BASICS

Okay, it's *Street Fighter* again, this time under the title of *Street Fighter Alpha: Warriors' Dreams*. The changes this time? More significant than usual as it happens, with the fusing of *Street Fighter* with *Final Fight*, and some new and amazing special attacks to master. There are twelve characters in all, featuring hidden bosses from the games. Expect a few of the regulars though with Ryu and Chun Li putting in appearances. Although *Tekken* has pushed back the boundaries of the one-on-one beat 'em up, the likes of *Street Fighter* are still very popular so this is definitely a title to watch for.



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SENTIENT

The press release for *Sentient* begins with a quote from the poet John Donne, although just how inspiring Sony Interactive's new adventure game is likely to be remains to be seen. Going for the highbrow buck, the metaphysical premise of *Sentient* is a space station shrouded in a mysterious plague, murders, a race against time and a few more murders. The player is left to figure out what it all means. What seems obvious from the screen shots, though, is that *Sentient* doesn't spare the horses when it comes to the graphics, with lots of impressively detailed sprites putting their oar in on the action.



G POLICE

Remember *Air Wolf* (now repeating on ITV most Saturdays)? Now SIE, no doubt inspired by the legendary television classic, have produced *G Police*, a game that sees the player staring out of the windshield of an attack vehicle a bit like a helicopter without the blades. The premise for your destructive urge is revenge for that murdered sister of yours and a desire to uncover the conspiracy behind her death. Life in your gyrocopter involves whirling around the skyscrapers of the metropolis shooting things and occasionally taking control of block hoppers(?) and riot vans. This is all done with typical 3D texture-mapped panache, and what we've seen of *G Police* looks quite stunning. How it plays, well, we'll just have to wait and see. For a change.



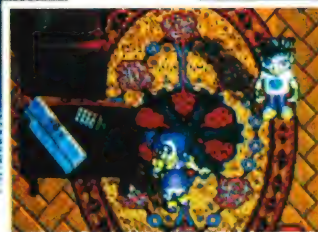
BLAM! MACHINEHEAD

Described by Core as a "3D sci-fi slaughterfest", it might be easier to explain the curiously titled *Blam! Machinehead* as another *Doom* style game to join the burgeoning ranks. It's got all the trademarks: the first person perspective, texture-mapped enemies, lots of cult-fiction 3D environments and of course the obligatory ultra-violence, making it a game marketed at those over 18 years old. Among its twists in style are the fact that the player assumes the role of Dr Kimberley Stride, a babe no less, who's struggling to keep it together in a post-apocalyptic fungi-infested world where reality mingles with the hallucinatory dimensions of cyber-space. There's also B-movie style FMV cut scenes for maximum cult effect.



TOMB RAIDERS

Core's *Tomb Raiders* looks set to be a big hit on the PlayStation. The style is similar to that of *Alone in the Dark* (previewed this issue), utilising the cinematic potential of 32bit technology to create an action adventure game that sees Lara Cruz endeavour to unlock the door on some of the worlds oldest mysteries. The game uses what's described as 'an intelligent camera system' to enhance the atmosphere and first impressions suggest that this expertise is matched by brilliantly smooth animation and some sexy light-sourced environments. Gosh.



I DON'T CARE IF YOU ARE A GOOD FRIEND OF YOGI AND BOO BOO; DEAD OR ALIVE, YOU'RE COMING WITH ME.



SCIENTISTS SAY WE ONLY USE
1/8 OF OUR BRAINPOWER.
FIND OUT WHAT THE OTHER 7/8 IS FOR.

SONY HAS LAUNCHED THE PLAYSTATION POWERLINE,
A TOUCHTONE SERVICE OFFERING YOU GAME HELP, HINTS AND TIPS,
TECHNICAL SUPPORT, SET UP ADVICE, AV ADVICE,
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POWERLINE 0881 505 505



PARASITE

Parasite from Sony Interactive is a platform game that revolves around the premise of an alien parasite taking over the body of an average nobody called Jack. The only way Jack can rectify this unpleasant problem is to move through the levels — all of which look beautiful with their high resolution graphics, impressive light sourcing and realistic sound fx — in an effort to exorcise the unwanted invader before he mutates completely and dies. *Parasite* is looking very classy indeed, with an attractive sci-fi story, lots of gloomy prison scenes and plenty of dank, dimly lit places to creep down.



STREET FIGHTER: ANIMATED

Just when you thought it was safe, up pops another *Street Fighter* game, this time *Street Fighter II Movie*. Before your brow begins to furrow, we're not talking about the Van Damme movie, but a game taken from the Manga cartoon. It features a new character in the shape of Cyborg and also includes the opportunity to improve on characters abilities, be they kicking, punching, agility and so on. What this means in terms of graphics is that the characters look more like they do in the original game, rather than attempts at actors down on their luck. Milking it maybe, but *Street Fighter II Movie* looks like it's keeping the legend alive.



BT PAGERS

British Telecom has yet another approach to communications, with a new line in pagers — the EasyReach. There's no connection fee needed, and no monthly fee or charges for the messages you receive. People just dial your pager number and then tap in a code to send you a message. Even better, these aren't the usual pagers, all boxy and boring, these are snazzy contraptions, available in a number of colours *plus* one of them vibrates in your trousers if you should so desire! We've bagged one of each of these great gadgets to give away to the three readers who can tell us the name of the cartoon bird who used to advertise for BT. Answers on a postcard to: BT Pager Competition.



A BT pager, yesterday.

WIN! BEYOND VISION'S NOVEMBER RELEASES
Beyond Vision's releases for November are a varied but very entertaining bunch, with widescreen editions of *Highlander*, *1,000,000 Years BC*, and *Salem's Lot/ Return To Salem's Lot* unveiled alongside the latest editions of *The Outer Limits*, where the world of the strange is detailed in these classic black and white episodes. *Highlander* is particularly of note, as a widescreen version had never seen the light of day, while *Salem's Lot* is one of the best Stephen King adaptations to date, with David Soul taking on the might of a vampire community, while handing the reins over to some complete unknown in the slasher movie sequel. Beyond Vision are offering five sets of each to the first five people to answer the following:
Which US cop pairing was David Soul half of?
A. Starsky and Hutch
B. Cagney and Lacey
C. Rocky and Bullwinkle
Mark your entry: Beyond Vision Competition (November), and send it to the usual address. Normal rules apply.

SCRATCH CARD REMINDER

For those of you who may be missing a card, here's a legally-obliged reminder just for you... You could have won one of 25 Sony PlayStations!

How to claim your prize:

Complete the form below. Send your winning scratch card and completed form to: PlayStation competition, Marketing Department, EMAP Images, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. Winners will be notified by post by 13th January 1995.

PLAYSTATION PLUS SCRATCH CARD COMPETITION FORM

I enclose my scratch card revealing 3 PSP logos.

Name:
Address:
..... Telephone no:

Important

In order to claim a PlayStation you must have revealed 3 PSP logos on your free scratch card. You may only claim one PlayStation per winning scratch card. We advise that you send your winning scratch card and form by registered post.

Employees of EMAP Images, Ancient House Press, their families and associates, are not eligible to enter this competition. No cash equivalent to the prize is available. No entries received after the closing date (22nd December 1995) will be accepted. No correspondence will be entered into by employees of EMAP Images in all matters relating to the competition. By entering you agree to take part in any post-event publicity. Entries with defaced or altered scratch cards will be disqualified. No purchase necessary. Write to EMAP Images Marketing Department and a card will be scratched on your behalf.

PARODIUS



**Mr Parodius is big
and pink and needs
your help to save
the galaxy.**

**Miss Josie Smith is
big and pink
and just needs
your help.**

0% polygons. 100% gameplay. Parodius Deluxe for PlayStation - 15 incredible levels of frantic blasting action in one of the most playable arcade shoot 'em ups ever seen on any games console.



As a plus, two whole games are included on one CD - original Parodius and the all-new Ultimate Parodius.

Available at all good game stores

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"GAME OVER, MAN..."



GAME OVER..."

In space, and in 1979, no one could hear you scream. In 1986 it was war, and in 1990, the bitch was back. Now, five years after HR Giger's alien menace last made it to the big screen, an all-new Alien experience is set to burst from Acclaim's corporate chest. Steve Merrett was the first to the scene...



There are some films that leave a lasting impression. For me, *Alien* is one. As a mere thirteen year-old I can remember sitting on the sofa watching John Hurt, Sigourney Weaver and Tom Skerritt spend an hour doing very little as ITV premiered Ridley Scott's classic. From what I understood, their space freighter had intercepted an SOS and the on board computer had dispatched them to find out its source. What I didn't understand, though, was why it was all taking so long. But then again, Scott's attempts at creating a believable futuristic environment weren't aimed at me. Then, after the second ad break I jumped out of my skin as a spidery creature jumped at John Hurt and it all went downhill from there. I mean, I'd jumped at a film before (the head rolling out



of that boat in *Jaws* saw to that), but *Alien* was unrelenting in its shocks. When Captain Dallas is jumped by the alien in the conduits, I jumped. When Jones the cat jumped out of that corner. I jumped. Basically, from the moment the alien went skudding through the remains of the *Nostromo*'s meal I crapped myself non-stop. I was converted, and my love of Giger's unique extra-terrestrial has remained unabated ever since.

With a superb sequel courtesy of the great god, James Cameron, and a bollocks third film by pop director David Fincher it seems I am not alone in my fanaticism of creatures with piston-like inner jaws. However, if only this interest spanned to

the attentions of video game developers. Let's face it, the gung-ho military bits of *Aliens* allow for a stunning shoot 'em up, while the first and third films would be ideal arcade/adventure fodder. But, no. Despite the potential the films hold, nobody has realised their potential. But now, with Acclaim stepping into the PlayStation fold, there's a serious chance that things may be about to change...



RELEASE	MARCH
PRICE	TBA
BY	ACCLAIM
PLAYERS	1
GENRE	SHOOT 'EM UP

THREE-IN-ONE

Alien Trilogy takes the form of a *Doom* clone, with the player viewing the scrolling play area through their character's 'eyes'. The



level design, however, seems considerably more detailed than most of the genre, with Probe recreating the dingy corridors and conduits perfectly. Doors swish open using samples lifted from the second film, and as you progress deeper into the game, alien secretions can be seen rounding off the edges of walls and housing the odd curled up creature or hidden Facehugger. Incorporating aspects from each of the three films was never going to be easy, but *Alien Trilogy*'s scenario casts the player as a Colonial Marine on a reconnaissance mission to gather information on the creatures. However, as witnessed in the films, the all-powerful

'Company' responsible for the expedition are interested in the creatures for bio-warfare reasons, and have also dispatched company reps to locate and capture one – with orders to eradicate any hostile competition (yourself included) – on sight. As such, starting with your first encounter with one of the acid-blooded beasts on a seemingly abandoned spaceship (the *Nostromo*?), the company updates your contradictory orders at the end of each stage with the intention of locating the alien homeworld, although pleas for info are soon forgotten and the player eventually embarks on an eradication mission, with the egg-laying Queen creature acting as the final adversary.



COMPANY TROOPS ARE INTERMINGLED WITH THE ALIEN WARRIORS, AND ARE OUT TO PREVENT YOUR INVESTIGATION. ODDLY, THOUGH, SHOOTING THEM REVEALS GREEN BLOOD: A HINT OF ALIEN IMPREGNATION OR SONY BEING SQUEAMISH?

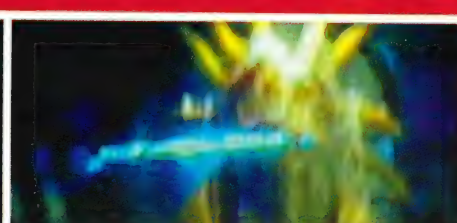
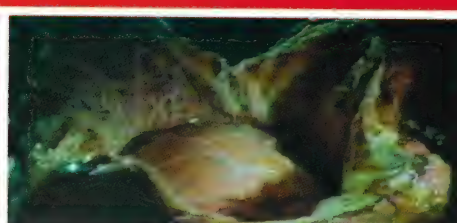
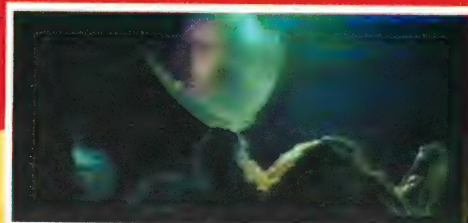


IT'S BEHIND YOOOOUUUUUUUUUU!

The best 'shock' bits from the *Alien* films...

KANE EXAMINES EGG (ALIEN)

Having followed company orders to locate the source of a distress signal, three crew members trace it to a seemingly organic space craft. Exploring the U-shaped vessel, one of the trio, Kane, finds a number of what appear to be eggs in the hold. On closer inspection, the top opens on one and a flurry of movement follows as a parasite of some description attaches itself to Kane's face.



A MARINE'S BEST FRIEND

Initially, the player is armed with a small handgun and a spare ammo clip which, while fine for picking off the handful of Facehuggers making up most of the first level, just doesn't have the oomph needed to reduce Giger's hydraulic-jawed creatures to acid-spattered mush. Dotted throughout the game's many bases, however, are a number of weapons instantly recognisable from the films, starting with Hicks' trusty shotgun from *Aliens*, to the pulse rifles and Vasquez and Drake's smart guns from the same film. The early version of the game we have seen was limited to the said pistol, shotgun and pulse rifles, but Probe's coders have made provision for flamethrowers and grenade launchers which – alongside the smart guns – will make their debut later in the game.

"THEY'RE COMING OUT OF THE WALLS..."

Later stages drop the player deep into an alien hive. In stark contrast to the earlier refinery and space station-based levels, the hives are barely lit with a few red lights illuminating the alien secretions which form the walls. The alien sprites merge in perfectly with the shiny goo and, as in the classic scene in *Aliens* where they start coming out of the walls, it's not uncommon for a creature to seemingly appear from nowhere. In the current version of the game, aliens appear from around corners and hide in the shadows, but Acclaim are hoping to include creatures which are curled up in niches who will reach out to grab marines.



KANE COLLAPSES (ALIEN)

With Kane free of the now-dead parasite, and seemingly unharmed, the crew prepare to go back into hypersleep for the rest of the journey. As they sit down to a last meal, Kane begins to retch, and falls across the table clutching his chest. As Ash and Dallas hold him down, he begins to convulse. Immediately, his chest explodes and a reptilian creature snarks from the cavity. With one final squeal, it exits Kane's corpse and skitters across the floor.





WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO USE? HARSH LANGUAGE?

The player's weapon counter is displayed, alongside their health status, in a small box to the bottom-left of the screen. If the current weapon – the shotgun, for example – runs out of ammo, it is automatically switched to the next in line until reaching the default pistol (which, conveniently, always has one last bullet in its chamber). Extra ammo is freely available throughout the mission, and is found by blowing up the crates and boxes punctuating the levels, or lying on top of the mushy pulp of felled human assailants – representatives of 'the company', who are out to trap an alien for bio-warfare research – you may have blown away. On entering the alien hive, though, the clips become harder to find, although a few can be found on the floor, discarded by captured marines now incubating alien chestbursters.



A FACEHUGGER SCRABBLING UP THE PLAYER'S BODY.



IN YOUR FACE

Billed in the films as 'mobile reproductive systems', Facehuggers are one of the game's biggest menaces. The first alien lifeform you'll encounter, Facehuggers are notoriously fast and skitter across the floor in pursuit of human prey. In keeping with their big screen counterparts, *Alien Trilogy*'s Facehuggers lie dormant behind packing crates or sealed doors, before taking a running jump at the player's onscreen 'face'. While they are incredibly fast, a direct hit or two glancing blows is enough to blow them to pieces with a brilliant digitised squeal indicating their demise. Should they attach themselves, however, a number of crawling fingers are shown at the bottom of the screen, with the player's energy bar shrinking accordingly. Any similarities to the film end here, as it is possible to shake off the clinging parasite before impregnation takes place, giving the player a second chance to blow it to pieces.

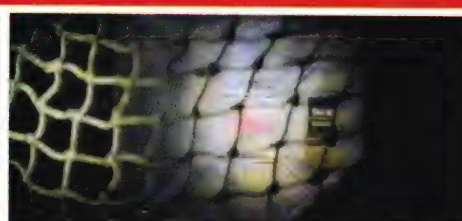


BLOW UP THE CAN TO DESTROY THE CRATES.



HUNTING THE ALIEN (ALIEN)

Equipped with cattle prods and flamethrowers, the team start to hunt the errant alien. Brett (Harry Dean Stanton) traps the creature in a small cupboard, and beckons Ripley and Parker to bring a net to catch it in. As they lean in to snare it, though, Jones, the ship's cat, leaps out and once again its time to launder those under garments.



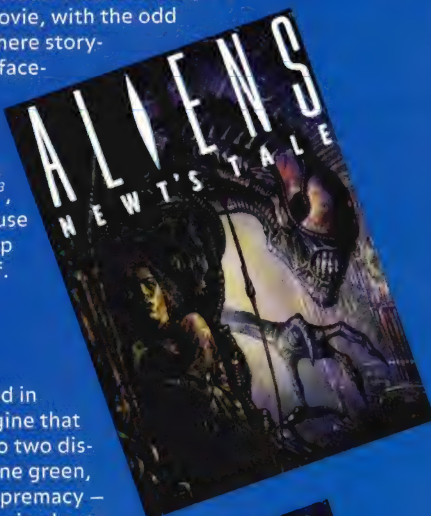
ESSENTIAL READING

ALIENS INVADE TITAN

In a deal with US comic house, Dark Horse, Titan Books have carte blanche to release compiled editions of the American firm's movie-based spin-off series. Of these, the Aliens books have proved the most popular as they have built upon the world created by the directors of the movie trilogy, and added new heroes to the mix and cross-bred the aliens so many times there are more varieties than in a can of Heinz beans. If you're a fan of the films but feel that comics are the domain of Dennis the Menace and the Bash Street Kids, prepare to be surprised...

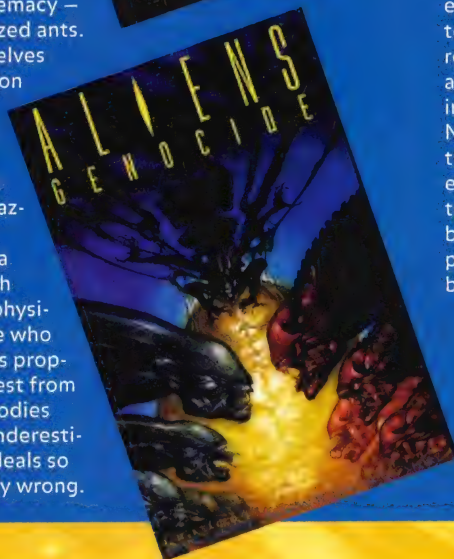
NEWT'S TALE

Newt's Tale is a graphic novel recounting the events of *Aliens*, but from Newt's perspective. Ripley and the marines don't appear until halfway through the book, by which time you've been party to the events leading up to, and including, the colonists finding the derelict craft that the Nostromo crew were 'fortunate' enough to discover some years previous. From then on, it's much the same as the movie, with the odd liberty taken here and there story-wise. It even shows the face-hugger approaching Newt's suspended animation chamber at the end (explaining why she wasn't around for *Alien 3*, no doubt, and not because the actress had grown up by then). Excellent stuff.



GENOCIDE

Imagine a planet covered in aliens. Nasty. Now imagine that the species has split into two distinct groups; one red, one green, each one battling for supremacy – and reminiscent of over-sized ants. This is where we find ourselves accompanying an expedition of soldiers and scientists, out to recover a rare alien jelly found only in alien eggs. This 'Royal Jelly' has been found to possess amazing properties and, when treated correctly, creates a drug called Xeno-Zip which gives adrenaline-busting physical enhancements to those who take it. Needless to say, its properties create a lot of interest from commercial and military bodies alike... Expect the usual underestimating that makes these deals so great, as it all goes horribly wrong.



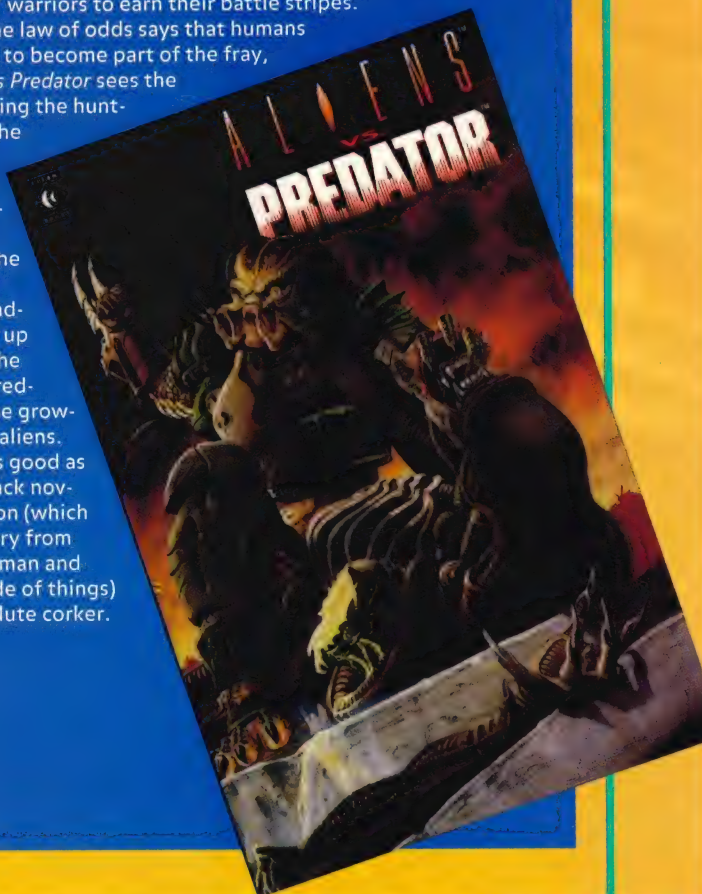
ROGUE

God knows how the writers of the alien books manage to keep inventing progressively more scary monsters. With the films setting up the Queen as the pinnacle of alien evolution, *Rogue* introduces a genetically-altered 'King' to the mix. *Rogue* is set in a run-down hole called the Charon Base, where an obsessed scientist called Professor Ernst Kleist, is about to fulfill a lifelong dream. By tampering with the genetic make-up of the alien, Kleist hopes to create a breed of trained alien, serving humanity. Needless to say, it all goes horribly wrong. Again.



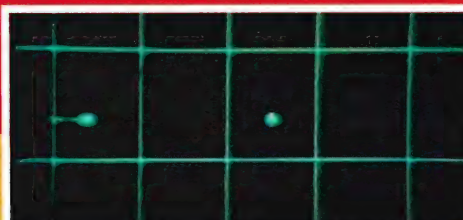
ALIENS VS PREDATOR

With Hollywood faffing around with a variety of scripts pitting Fox's two greatest creations against each other, the first battle between the acid-blooded beasts and the inter-galactic big-game hunters is on the printed page. Used as a training exercise, the predators send a ship full of alien eggs to a colonised planet, wait until indigenous lifeforms are impregnated, and send all their 'unblooded' warriors to earn their battle stripes. However, the law of odds says that humans were bound to become part of the fray, and *Aliens vs Predator* sees the hunters joining the hunt against the alien menace. This is an absolutely superb story with the human and Predator leaders teaming up to take on the renegade Predators and the growing army of aliens. Not quite as good as the paperback novelised version (which tells the story from both the human and predator side of things) but an absolute corker.



DALLAS IN CONDUIT (ALIEN)

In a desperate measure to flush the ever-growing alien out into the open, Dallas takes a flame-thrower into the Nostromo's many conduits. As Lambert tracks his progress via a motion detector, she starts to receive a second signal. Panicking, she warns Dallas that it is closing in. Rushing, Dallas flees into a two-way corridor. With nothing in sight, he pans his torch around: straight into the face of the creature.





DATA RETRIEVAL

In addition to the elimination of the alien warriors, secondary missions include locating essential equipment lost by previous teams. As the aliens have no use for the laptop computers, data cards and motion trackers left by the earlier excursions, the objects are left dotted around and bonuses are rewarded for their retrieval. Similarly, on locating the laptop, details of the previous mission and information regarding the alien hive can be stored away for later use.



CLEARING THE CRATES REVEALS FACEHUGGERS HIDING AND READY TO POUNCE.



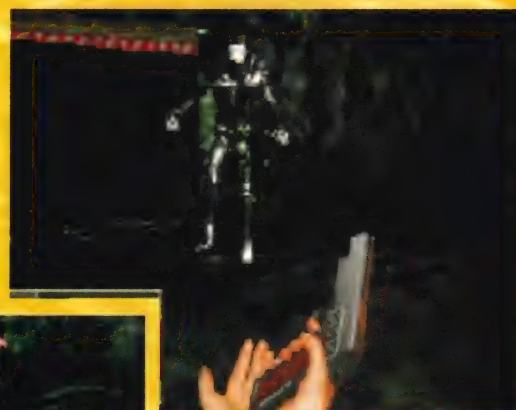
ONE OF THE ALIENS LIT BY THE FLARE FROM YOUR GUN.



THE REFINERY WHERE THE COMPANY SEIZE CONTROL.

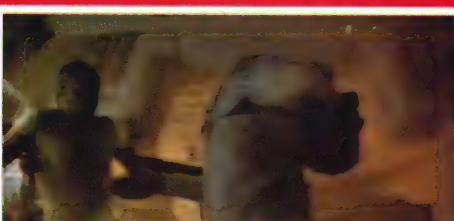
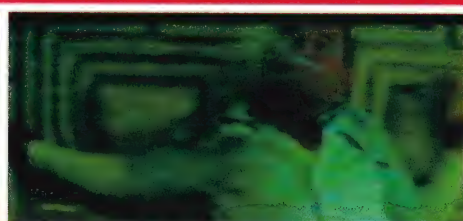
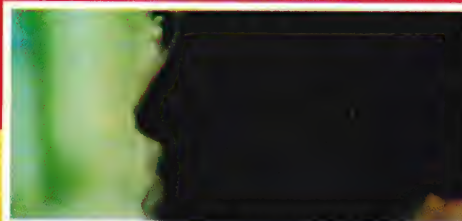
CHAMBER OF HORRORS

Alien Trilogy mimics aspects of the films brilliantly, and one particularly neat touch is the game's many egg chambers. Laid by an as-yet-unseen Queen Alien sprite, the eggs are found in sealed off rooms, guarded by alien warriors. On entering the chamber, the eggs begin to crack open as the Facehuggers sense a human presence, so it's wise to ensure you have a flamethrower or pulse rifle to hand in order to drench the room in flames or bullets, bursting the eggs and their contents almost instantly. To add a logical conclusion to the game, Probe and Acclaim's Motion Capture team are currently planning a massive Alien Queen for the decisive final battle, with the player plugging away at the monster and destroying its egg sac in order to end the production of fresh alien hordes.



ASH GOES CRAZY-APE (ALIEN)

With Dallas gone, Ripley interrogates the Nostromo's computer, Mother, for information regarding the alien. In doing so, she uncovers a clause in their contracts which states they are dispensable and the alien must be kept alive at all costs. Ash enters and tries to kill Ripley, but in the ensuing fight he is decapitated, revealing him to be an android. No wonder he called the computer 'Mother.'



THE MOVIES

Alien (1979)

Ridley Scott's *Alien* single-handedly reinvented the science-fiction genre. Whereas the likes of *Logan's Run* and *Star Wars* had offered sanitised visions of the future, with white walls and cute robots, *Alien* followed the mundane lives of a party of 'intergalactic haulage workers' who stumble upon an extraterrestrial unlike anything ever seen before. But before we see John Hurt attacked by what appears to be a large baseball glove, we're given an alien ship that looks to have been more 'grown' than built, and are drawn into the unusual relationship between Ash, the science officer and 'Mother' — the ship's computer (and an apt name considering Ash's physiological state!). Immortal images include the hideous spider-like face-hugger, John Hurt's explosive alien birth, and, of course, one of the most frightening monsters ever devised. Greatly enhanced by the brilliant visual works of H.R. Giger, nothing beats this film in the 'sweaty panic' stakes. Remember, in space, no-one can hear you scream.

Aliens (1986)

Following Ridley Scott's by-now established classic was never going to be easy, but *Aliens* Director, James Cameron, knew that if the first film succeeded with one alien, his needed to be riddled with the buggers. Fifty-seven years after the events of the first film, Ripley is found by a dredging machine and returned to Earth. Attempting to explain her reasons for blowing up the *Nostromo*, the court inform Ripley that the so-called alien-infested planet was freshly colonised and clear of aliens thankyouverymuch. Rather unsurprisingly, they then lose contact, and it falls to Ripley and a crack team of Marines to return to Acheron and end the alien menace — but not before they're introduced to the alien Queen. If *Alien* is full of shocks, *Aliens* is a gung-ho shoot 'em up of a film which sates the need to see more of Giger's creation and expands upon their breeding and history. Stunning, and quite easily the best of the three.

Alien 3 (1993)

With only Ripley, a young colonist called Newt, and a Marine called Hicks surviving the events of *Aliens*, tragedy marks the beginning of *Alien 3* as a rogue Facehugger spills acid blood on their escape ship's console and starts a fire. As the crew life support pods are jettisoned to the nearest planet, Hicks and Newt are killed en route, and Ripley awakes to find herself on Fiorina, a prison planet inhabited by rapists and serial killers — with a second Facehugger tagging along to unleash another problem for the already-stretched warders. The weakest of the three, *Alien 3* tries to recreate the jumps and thrills of the first film, but none of the characters survives long enough to build up a relationship with Ripley, and as they're all scum-bag killers and rapists you couldn't give a toss if they get killed anyway! Oh yeah, and Ripley dies at the end. There, you don't have to see it now, do you!

Alien 4 (TBC)

It's bound to happen. Sigourney Weaver has shown a distinct interest in reviving the Ripley character, going as far as to say she misses her! Apparently (and I'm sure this will all make sense) the authorities of the future can deny you the 'right of suicide', and using a few fingers of Ripley (which, incidentally, is not a new Cadbury's bar) employ *Jurassic Park*-esque genetics to 'grow' a new gal. Other rumours include the first movie appearance of a 'King' alien, an alien landing on Earth, and a *Predator* thrown into the mix, too. And there's even an *Alien 5* rumour floating around.

THEY THINK IT'S ALL OVER (ALIENS)

After the exhausting events of *Aliens*, Ripley and Bishop congratulate each other on a job well done. A hissing noise distracts Bishop, and he looks down to see what appears to be acid burning into the deck. Suddenly, the android is punctured by a huge serrated blade, as the alien Queen uses her massive tail to lift him off the deck and disembowel him. A literal twist in the tale...



WIN! ALIEN BOOK SETS COURTESY OF TITAN BOOKS...

Until Sigourney Weaver signs on the dotted line, a fourth *Alien* film is looking highly unlikely in the foreseeable future. Until then, fans of the space parasites have to console themselves with Titan Books' ongoing series of Dark Horse *Alien* compilations. No bad thing, as the stories take the basic premise of the film trilogy and update the battle for survival with ever more complex double-crosses, technological advances, and gene-spliced aliens.

To celebrate our glorification of all things acid-blooded, Titan are offering five sets of five books — *Newt's Tale*, *Book One*, *Genocide*, *Rogue*, and *Labyrinth* — to the first randomly-picked entries out of the

freshly-hatched egg. To enter, simply answer the following question and send your answer in to the address below:

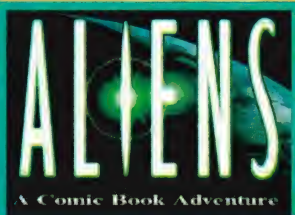
Who played Hicks in *Aliens*?

- A. Michael Ironside
- B. Michael Biehn
- C. Michael Douglas

Mark entries: 'Titan Books Competition (*Alien*)', and send them to: PlayStation Plus, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU



MINDSCAPE'S ALIENS STRIP



Currently pencilled in for release in April '96, Mindscape are also working on a game based on Giger's creations — or, more specifically, Dark Horse Comics' characters and scenarios and their strip-based efforts to stem the aliens' spread across the galaxy. *Aliens: The Comic Book Adventure* is a point 'n' click adventure game with the player cast as a space explorer

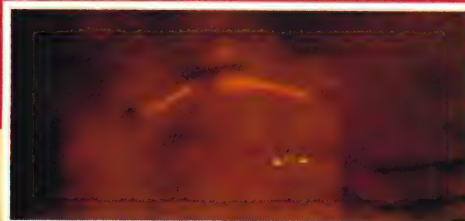
roused from Hypersleep to investigate a distress call from a space station. Using a selection of icon-based commands, the station, B54-C, is your oyster as strange reports of secretions on the wall and stricken crew members gradually unveils the extent of the alien menace.

In addition to the assorted puzzles thrown into the mix, the player is also charged with the preservation of the crew, so constant surveillance of their health and psychological stats is the order of the day, with the benefit of also allowing them to be manipulated and sent on missions as you tackle the job in hand. A mixture of rendered backdrops and detailed sprites is on Mindscape's menu, making for a game radically different from Acclaim's *Alien Trilogy*, and a full preview is in the works.



FINAL SACRIFICE (ALIEN 3)

As a Bishop's human creator, a high-ranking company rep, desperately tries to convince Ripley he can remove the alien starting to move in her chest, she stands on a precipice above a huge smelting plant... Not trusting the company who branded her friends 'disposable', Ripley throws herself into the molten pool. As she falls, the alien embryo (a Queen) erupts, only for the dying heroine to hold on until they both are cremated by the superheated iron. But can this seemingly final ending be altered for use in *Alien 4*?



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SEGA ZONE 92%

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MEGA 91%

It puts anything else on the Mega-CD to shame... A standard by which all future Mega-CD games will be judgedd

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This is the game you simply must play... This is the game that will embarrass the hell out of the other CD-developers.

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RELEASE	DECEMBER
PRICE	£39.99
BY	EA
PLAYERS	1
GENRE	SHOOT 'EM UP

VIEWPOINT



IN ADDITION TO AVOIDING THE FLAK AND ALIEN SHIPS, OBJECTS SUCH AS THESE SPINNING TILES ALSO PROVE FATAL ON CONTACT.

THE GARDEN STAGE REVEALS A MIXTURE OF MUTATED INSECTS AND PLANTS, WITH HUGE MILLIPEDES AND METALLIC WORMS SPINNING TOWARDS THE PLAYER'S SHIP.



It has been said that there are but seven styles of video game. Of

these, the platform and shoot 'em up genres are perhaps the hardest, with the latter outdating the likes of *Mario* and his kin by at least a year. However, what comes around goes around, and with an updated version of *Space Invaders* entering the arcades a few years back, and Ocean's Sony conversion of the aging *Raiden* coin-op, EA have deemed the time right to unleash a shoot 'em up which lifts ideas from more classic coin-ops than Richard Madeley (or Stuart Hall) in the booze department in Safeways. Originally a Neo-Geo game, *Viewpoint*'s greatest influence is the hoary old Sega coin-op, *Zaxxon*. Released in 1983, *Zaxxon* took the basic idea of the likes of *Scramble* and *Galaxians*, but replaced the traditional horizontal or vertically-scrolling stages with a diagonal play area, with the enemy turrets and ships moving down from the top-right of the scrolling screen. Add to this 'boss' aliens lifted from contemporaries such as *Phoenix*, and *Zaxxon* was ready to take on the hordes of invaders and Gorf warriors terrorising the UK. SNK's *Viewpoint* went one step further by not only blatantly stealing and enhancing the *Zaxxon* engine, but incorporating other ideas — this time from more recent blasters. In keeping with this theme of constant improvement, EA's PlayStation version goes one better than the Neo-Geo game by stripping away the pastel sprites of the SNK game with light-sourced backdrops and sprites.

SIX OF THE BEST

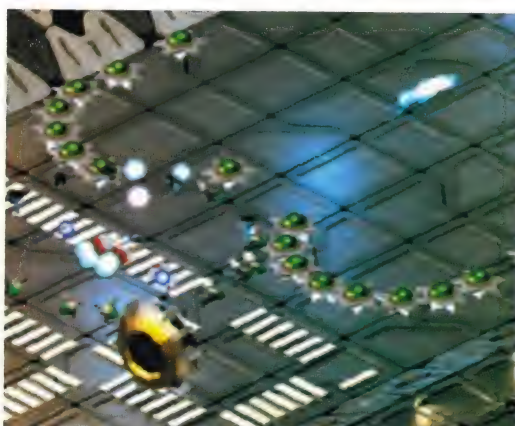
Viewpoint spans six stages, each with a graphical theme. The levels run along a diagonal track, with the alien hordes appearing as formations of bullet-spewing alien ships or ground-based defences. Similarly, immovable obstacles also line the route, ranging from moving walls to tiny stone gateways.



FOREST: The garden of Eden gone wild. The innocent-looking grassy plains are home to bio-mechanical worms and millipedes, presided over by a huge Queen bee.



WATER: A superb rippling effect gives way to fish attacks reminiscent of the end of an episode of *Stingray*, before giving way to some larger aquatic life forms.



TRENCH: A warm-up stage, with a blatant steal from *R-Type* in the middle. A robotic mothership awaits at the end of the stage.



SPACE: The final battle takes place across a rickety space platform, with asteroids adding to the larger number of alien ships patrolling this stage.

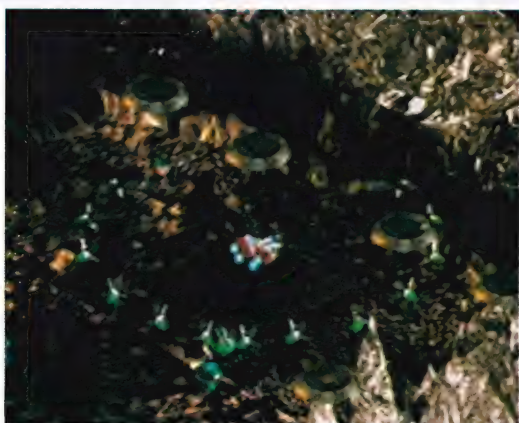
POINT



PREVIEW



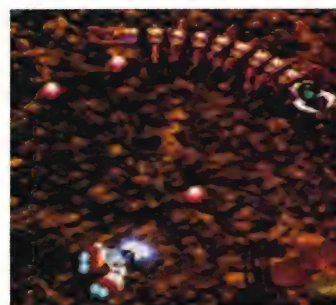
THE SPACE LEVEL IS BARELY 50% COMPLETE, BUT IS INHABITED BY A WEIRD BUNCH OF GEOMETRICAL SHAPES AND ASSORTED ALIEN SPACECRAFT. BY NOW, HOWEVER, THE SCREEN IS PACKED WITH FLAK AND ENEMY SHIPS.



MINE: Dark and alien infested. Tortuous caverns and passageways make this the most intricate of the levels.

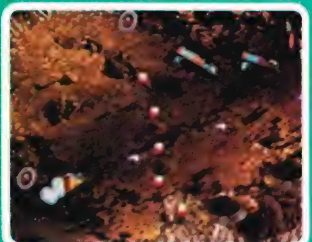


LAVA: Volcanic eruptions and rock-based obstacles and aliens. Very similar in style to the mine level.



EVOLUTION OF AN IDEA

Viewpoint is a testament to the fact that some ideas are so do, they should be constantly updated. When *Zaxxon* was released all those years ago, its flash graphics and mixture of existing gamestyles earned it instant acclaim, so when SNK released the greatly-enhanced *Viewpoint* for the Neo-Geo it was equally well received. And now, with the Sony version boasting over 32,000 colours on screen, it seems the 1982 classic has been updated as far as is technically possible. For now.



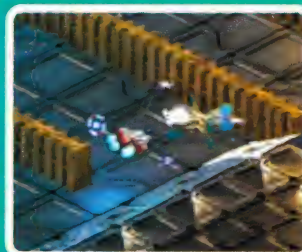
SOMETHING WICKED...

End-of-level guardians are standard fare in shoot 'em ups these days, and *Viewpoint*'s six stages are dominated by a larger creature expanding upon the level theme. As the player approaches the end of the scrolling stage, a temporary lull in the action is the calm before the storm. The scrolling stops as the huge creature — be it a huge mechanical bee, an alien mothership, or genetically-altered crab — scrolls on to screen, spewing even more bullets on screen than its fleet put together, as the player hits it with everything they've got. The 'boss' creatures are extremely resilient, though, and undergo several changes in attack pattern and form before they explode and open the way to the next stage.



WALLED IN...

In addition to plugging the alien fleets, *Viewpoint* adds variety to its levels with obstacles which require split-second timing or a well-timed shot to get past. For example, during the water stage, a series of walls jut out of the ground, smashing into unsuspecting heroes and prematurely ending their mission. By far the most innovative idea revolves around a series of seemingly impassable barriers. On approaching these, shooting them has little effect; however, each has a small wheel mechanism built into the side. Blasting the wheel rotates it, drawing the barrier back as it does so. The trick is then to draw the barriers as far back as possible and whiz through the freshly-created gap before the barriers snap back in place. Cool.



THE GRAPHICALLY-STUNNING
FLAME BOMB.

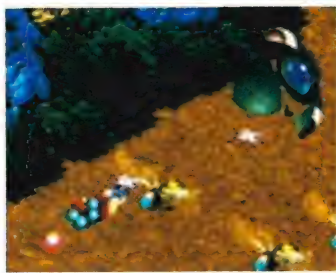
ARMED AND DANGEROUS

The player's craft is a small white dart, and comes armed with standard issue single-firing lasers which can be supplemented by two orbiting globes to treble its firepower. Similarly, it also borrows the 'beam' weapon made famous in Irem's *R-Type* coin-op, which is powered up by holding down the firebutton; the strength of the beam determined by the time the button is depressed. If all else fails, the ship is also equipped with three 'smart bombs' which are activated using the square button on the joypad, with 'refills' available as your journey into space progresses:



FLAME BLAST: A wave of flame appears from under the player's ship, incinerating anything in its path as it moves forward.





UNLEASHING A SMART BOMB AT THE TRENCH LEVEL'S 'BOSS'.

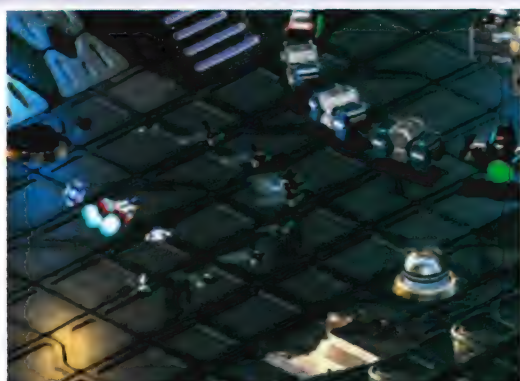
EXTRA GRAPHICAL FINESSE AS THE BEAM WEAPON ILLUMINATES THE DARKER LEVELS.



LOOKS FAMILIAR

To call *Viewpoint* familiar is to say David Mellor is a bit ugly – a massive understatement. While it is technically far superior to any other blaster you may care to mention, some of its ideas are lifted straight out of video game history. The comparisons to *Zaxxon* are inevitable – and that's no bad thing – with the ability to reposition the altitude of your ship in the Sega game missing from the EA game, but the main inspirations for some of *Viewpoint*'s aliens are Irem's *R-Type*, with a bit of *Centipede* and *Xenious* thrown in for good measure. The most noticeable 'lift', though, takes the form of a circular alien midway through the game's opening trench level. As the segmented creature blocks the way, only its red sections can be destroyed, creating a small gap its body. If you were to whiz back in time to 1986 and the Irem game you'll see something very similar indeed. And I wonder where they got the idea for that beam weapon...

DEJA VU...



HOMING MISSILES: A cirlet of small dart missiles spread across the screen, locking on to the alien hordes. If the screen is cleared of aliens, any remaining missiles run parallel to the player and lock on to any new aliens or installations entering the screen.

SMART BOMB: The screen whites out as a series of concentric circles spread out across the screen, destroying anything in the area. The most devastating and visually impressive of the three weapons.

DESCENT

COMPANY	INTERPLAY
RELEASE	JANUARY
PRICE	£TBA
PLAYERS	1-8
GENRE	SHOOT 'EM UP



You just can't trust miners can you. The cheek of 'em! They spend 14 hours a day down deep, dark, dank pits, the threat of mine collapse never far from their minds, their lungs filling with coal dust, and then they have the affront to start complaining about stuff like working conditions or pay. I blame that Scargill you know. Commie!... Things on the moon aren't much better though, but this time the saboteurs are aliens rather than bristling Welshmen. Having taken over the mines which belong to the Post Terrain Mineral Corporation these aliens have even succeeded in converting the mining robots to their evil cause!

And your job? Shoot the lot of them! Sitting in the pilot seat of a small craft known as a skimmer, the player in *Descent* travels through over 30 levels of 3D shoot 'em up action, picking up lethal weapons and fuel, and blasting robots on the way to destroying generators and command centres.

Descent is another game making the conversion from the PC where its *Doom*-style action proved very popular. Unlike *Doom* though players can also scale or descend mine shafts thanks to the skimmer's anti-gravity capacity. If, after your frantic and destructive exploration, you manage to emerge from the mines alive the only obstacle left as you exit will be the barrage of rotten eggs and cries of "SCAB!"



UPSIDE DOWN - HOW YOU TURN ME!

As Matt is always keen to remind his *PlayStation Plus* colleagues, in a game like *Descent* "you have to stop thinking two-dimensionally!". And damn right he is to. Getting used to floating upside down along a ceiling or travelling through a mine shaft in the floor is pretty disorientating at first. It also means you have to be on guard against aliens approaching beyond your field of vision both above and below.



LOTS OF DIMLY BUT BEAUTIFULLY LIT TUNNELS TO EXPLORE.



ONE OF THE MANY EXPLOSIONS YOU CAN EXPECT IN DESCENT.

SHOOT TO THRILL

A shoot 'em up isn't worth a thing unless it's got some pretty darn good weapons. Fortunately *Descent* has. A player can use two different weapons at any one time and there are always pick-ups available. Here's a look at some you'll come across:

CONCUSSION MISSILE



This little beauty fires a heavy impact explosive into enemies causing considerable damage.

SPREADFIRE



This will see to attacks from multiple opponents spreading fire over a wide area.

PROXIMITY BOMB



You get four in a pack which you set down for those chasing you to stumble over.

SHIELD BOOSTER



When you have no more shields the game's up. This pick-up sees to it that that doesn't happen.

VULCAN CANNONS



A laser which can be powered up to make it stronger. Potentially the most lethal weapon.

ENERGY BOOSTER



Energy is always needed to power the weapons which drain it, which makes this pick-up pretty damn essential.



ENEMIES TEND TO TURN UP NEXT TO THAT DOOR YOU WANT TO GET THROUGH. ZAP THEM!



IT'S JUST ONE GREAT EXPLOSION AFTER ANOTHER REALLY ISN'T IT?



ALIENS INVESTIGATE THE BLUE ROOM. GET THEM IN THE CROSSHAIR AND DESTROY!



I TELL YA, IF YOU WERE IN THE DOOR BUSINESS, YOU'D MAKE A PRETTY PENNY IN THIS PLACE.



GET RID OF THE TROUBLESOME ROBOT AND THE BOMBS COULD BE YOURS!



THE HEAT FROM THE GENERATOR REVEALS ITSELF. OR IS IT A BURNT POP TART?

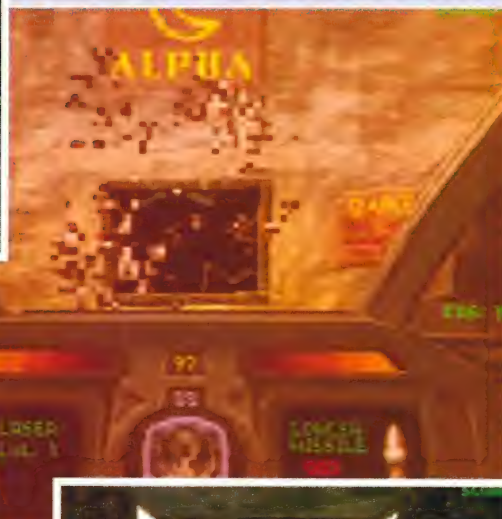


PREVIEW

DESCENT

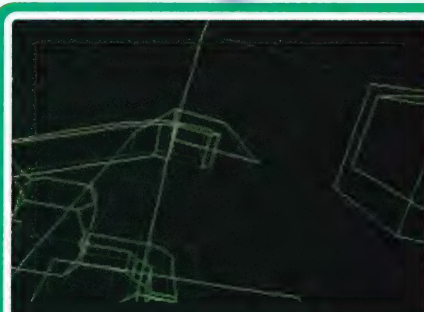
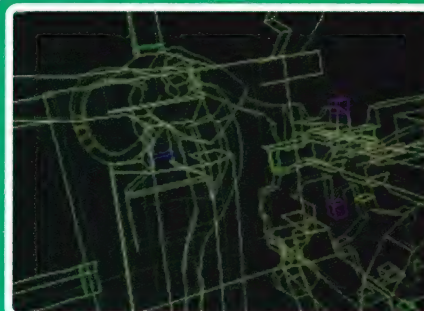
ROBOTS... THOUSANDS OF 'EM!

There are loads of different robots and alien life forms to tackle in this game and you're going to have to take them all on if you want to get to the generators and exits alive. They naturally vary in strength and have a habit of developing into gangs as you progress to later levels. Some are especially cunning, not only attacking from behind but sneaking up on you from above and below. Beware!



ALL MAPPED OUT

In order to find the command centres and generators, the player needs to make good use of the auto-map. This tells him his position on the level and where the key areas are. The maps look incredibly complex but do not fear, you can close in on any section of interest and rotate it to any angle. The map is also useful for figuring out where secret rooms are located.



THROUGH THE GRATE THE HEAT OF THE GENERATOR REVEALS ITSELF. BUT HOW DO YOU GET TO THE COMMAND CENTRE?



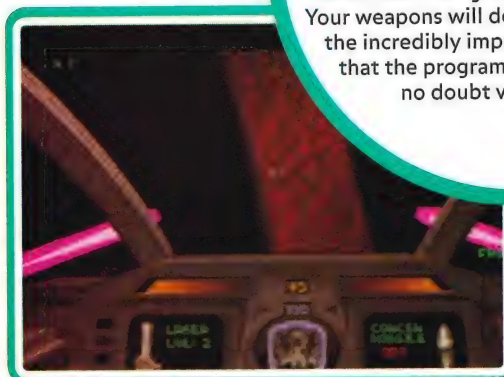
THIS IS WHERE YOU CAN GET YOUR SHIP RE-FUELLED AND RE-ENERGISED.



WHEN WANDERING DOWN DIM CORRIDORS KEEP USING FLARES TO MARK THE WAY. IN THIS SHOT THOUGH, IT'S THE DIM LIGHTS IN THE BACKGROUND THAT REVEAL THE ALIEN INTRUDER.

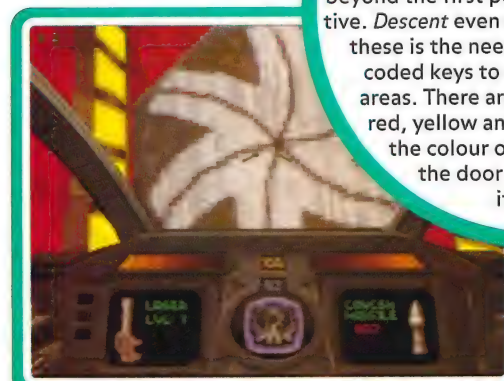
SHAFTED

Many of the shafts and corridors in *Descent* are either very dimly lit or else pitch black. Enemies could be lurking just about anywhere. It is fortunate for you then that the skimmer comes complete with a vast supply of flares that fire light out into the darkness. Your weapons will do this as well, revealing the incredibly impressive light sourcing that the programmers of *Descent* are no doubt very proud of.



KEYED IN

The resemblance to *Doom* extends simply beyond the first person immersive perspective. *Descent* even uses similar ideas. One of these is the need to hunt down colour-coded keys to gain access to certain areas. There are three colours in all – red, yellow and blue. Simply match the colour of the key to that of the door and hey presto: it opens!



THE GREEN LIGHT ON THIS ALIEN SIMPLY DENOTES "COME AND HAVE A GO IF YOU THINK YOU'RE HARD ENOUGH".



METAL MICKEY EMBARKS ON A PSYCHOTIC RAMPAGE. AND YOU'RE HIS FIRST VICTIM.

COMPANY	TELSTAR
RELEASE	FEBRUARY
PRICE	£39.99
PLAYERS	1-2
GENRE	SPORTS



It's a sad fact, but the Sony PlayStation has more soccer games than Alan Ball's Man City have goals this season. And now, with the plethora of PlayStation kickabouts offering dozens of different viewpoints and levels of realism, Telstar's game aims to combine these essential factors with managerial aspects — with the player not only responsible for his team's on-field antics, but balancing the books behind the scenes, too. Yep, you too can be Alan Ball in the first 'Football Manager' game for the Sony machine — but hopefully somewhat more successful than the squeaky-voiced ex-England pro.

Programmed by Elite's Motivetime development team, *On-Side* can be played on two levels. The first is as a straight arcade footy game, with the player guiding their chosen eleven to victory against the numerous computer-controlled teams. Three leagues — French, English and German — offer a number of opponents, and a selection of leagues and tournaments are complemented by full in-game commentary.

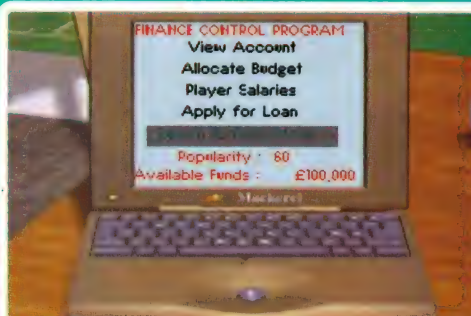
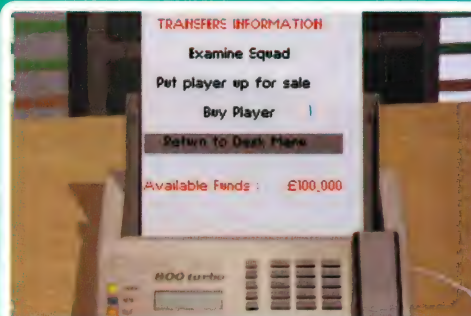
Alternatively, you are invited to don the traditional sheepskin coat of management, and dabble in the transfer market and backroom (but not hand) deals, with the option of mixing the two and putting your ideas into practice on the pitch.

ON-SIDE



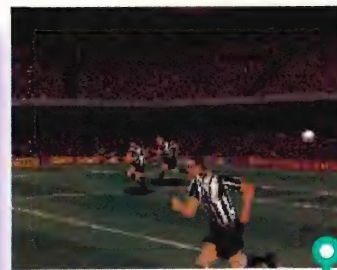
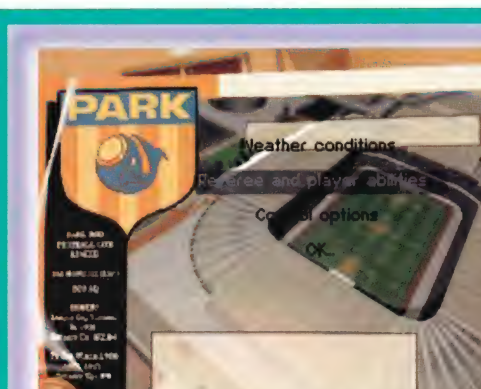
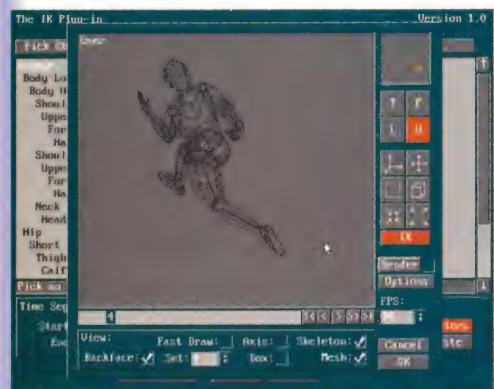
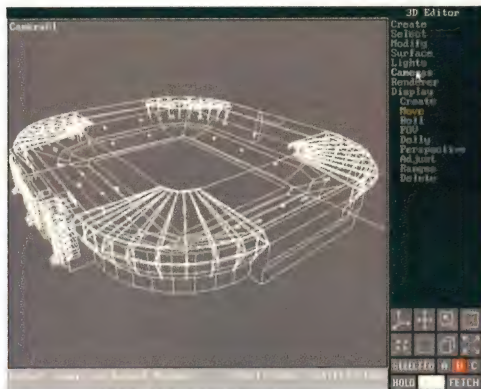
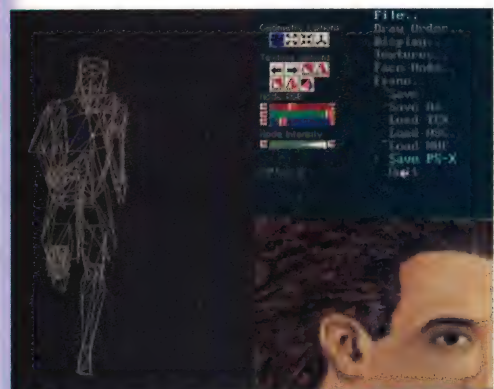
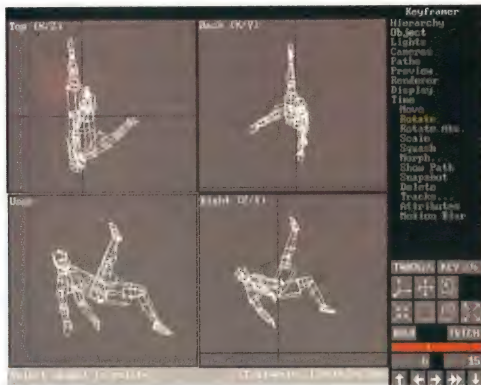
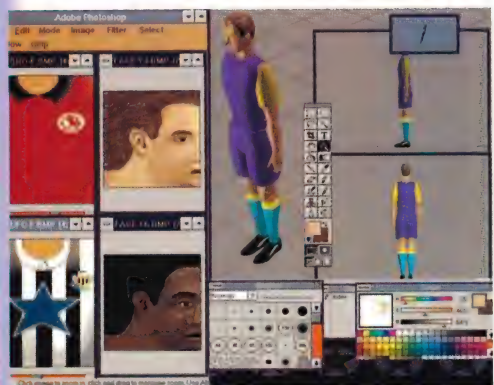
MANAGERIAL EXPERIENCE REQUIRED

The managerial aspects of the game take the form of wheeling and dealing in the transfer market and balancing the books while juggling these monetary matters with the training and tactics for your team's next match. The cash side of the deal is shown via a series of static screens including a boardroom where extra cash can be begged for. There's also a fax machine for contacting other managers with details regarding transfer deals, while tactics are effected in the changing room with the age-old tactician's aide, the trusty blackboard. Not all of us are Glenn Hoddle, though (thank God), and if playing for and running a team proves too much, the option to control your team can be left in the PlayStation's hands as you bite your nails awaiting the result.



TEAM BUILDING

Motivetime's main aim is to make the in-game graphics as realistic as possible. To this end, they are following the trend set by the likes of *PowerSports*, *Actua* and *FIFA* and using wireframe-based characters for optimum realism. Using a SGI system to build up and render the player sprites, *On-Side* uses over 7000 frames of animation in all, with the player selecting the camera view at will. With the stadium itself also built up from vectors, the programmers generate a fully light-sourced play area and, as such, panning around is faster and more convincing. With the basic 3D engine up and running, Motivetime are also planning a series of graphical extras, including the pitch getting damaged (divots kicked out, etc) during a match, with wet pitches particularly susceptible. Similarly, the detail on the player sprites is above and beyond that of others in the genre, with players actually sporting faces as opposed to polygon-noses and a distinct lack of eyes.



ON-SIDE'S LEVEL OF DETAIL EVEN SHOWS TEAM SPONSORSHIP!



THE CLOSE-UP VIEW CAN BE SWITCHED FOR A DISTANT ONE.



AS YET, THE GOALIE CODE HASN'T BEEN IMPLEMENTED.



NEWCASTLE MAKE A RUN AT THE INERT OPPOSITION GOALIE.





COMPANY	CORE DESIGN
RELEASE	DECEMBER
PRICE	TBA
PLAYERS	1
GENRE	SHOOT 'EM UP



It's perhaps the bizarrst accolade in gaming to be the 'one decent title' for a format, but that's the frightening situation Core Design's original *Thunderhawk* was in. They estimate that it sold to around 80% of Sega Mega-CD ownership. But it would have been nice to get into double figures. No such worries for the sequel, due for the entirely more credible PlayStation some time before Christmas — Core are planning an early December release, but slippage is almost certain. We say this bearing in mind Core's propensity for running into delays for many of their releases. Something to do with wrong kind of leaves on the disks, or perhaps because all their coding is done in-house and to somewhat overly optimistic deadlines.

This might bridge the gap between the short time to release and the obviously early state these screenshots suggest *Firestorm: Thunderhawk 2* is in. However, the game's mechanics are most definitely there, and it's just a case of porting data for the five campaign theatres from the concurrent PC CD-ROM development. For the uninitiated, *Firestorm: Thunderhawk 2* is an arcade helicopter game, with the player controlling one of several helicopters within increasingly demanding wartime scenarios. Playability is the watchword with *Firestorm: Thunderhawk 2*, with the emphasis on speed and destruction — with hordes of fancy missiles ready to turn intricately-designed levels into fiery wastelands. But then, war is hell...



THUNDERHAWK



OUTSIDE LOOKING IN

Like most flight-sims, *Thunderhawk 2* offers a choice of viewpoints, but being a helicopter sim specifically, the nature of these is somewhat different. A lot of the action is stop-start and the missions crowded with targets, the following external views are designed to let you pan around the chopper in 360 degrees. This provides the bizarre spectacle of controlling your craft by remote.





THE VIEWPOINT PANS AROUND THE CHOPPER AS IT MOVES.

WHIRLYBIRDS

We're promised that all the enemy hardware will be exceptionally intelligent. The best demonstration of this at present is the helicopters, who scramble in reaction to presence.



You can surprise choppers on the pad, preventing them launching, which is probably quite embarrassing for the pilot.



Otherwise, a game of cat and mouse ensues. The helicopters are never your main objective, but hinder the completion of missions.



This is about as close as is safe to get to a helicopter — as various unfortunate parachutists of yore could confirm. Notice how the polygon graphics construction keeps everything looking detailed and not horribly blocky and broken-up: the anti-aliasing problem of many 3D sprite games.

THUNDERHAWK 2

WHAM BANG
THANK YOU
MA'AM

The nature of *Thunderhawk 2* is a shoot 'em up simulation with the simplest of controls and a large amount of small missions. It plays more like a series of 'levels' rather than pretending to recreate the Battle of Britain. However, the short stages are structured into scenic campaigns, the first of which is what you're seeing here. Everything within the level, bar the mountains, is designed to be destroyed, and you're encouraged to have fun with it. When you target an enemy, you can switch to a positional view and see your own incoming missile. That explains why this screenshot is at a weird angle.



COMPANY	MILLENIUM
RELEASE	NOVEMBER
PRICE	£44.99
PLAYERS	1
GENRE	ADVENTURE



f Health and Safety could see the workplace of the future, they would not be amused. The benign

corporations of today, will become shadowy, corrupt, politically-motivated exploiters of men. Well, according to those pessimistic visionaries at Millenium who have woven a sophisticated plot for their new adventure/strategy/shoot 'em up, *Defcon 5*.

You've been employed by the Tyron Corporation specifically to change the defence system on the mining operation MRPS from manned to automated. You have the software and 48 hours. The change has been forced on the company by a cut in government funding. They are not happy.

From this opening, conveyed in a sophisticated 'movie' intro, things start to get horribly wrong. Your tasks with the software are hindered by attacks on the base by alien spacecraft and ultimately infiltration of the base by fearsome berserkers. The action cycles through *Doom*-style Berserker hunting across the huge base, strategy maintenance of the computer functions, and the retrieval of objects you need to escape. You might also want to find out exactly why you got caught right in the middle of the first ever alien invasion.

Your only help through all of this is the base's advanced main computer VOS. It's many functions and warning system will reduce the odds slightly in your favour. Look out for a review in the next issue of *PlayStation Plus*.

DEFCON 5



ACCESS ALL AREAS

The VOS is housed at the top of the Admin block of the complex. It has a hierarchical structure, with sub-menus in Communications, Tactical and Archives. These are easily manipulated through its odd-looking golfball interface. There are various terminals around the complex which allow remote access; though some functions are limited by location and security status. You'll have to work out how to upgrade this to progress.



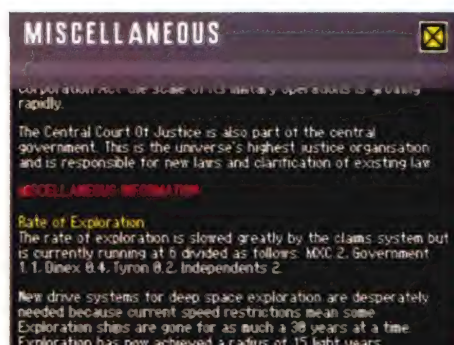
SCHEMATICS

Plan views of the entire base, except annoyingly, the Service levels. These are labelled and monitored, so you can see the proximity of enemies and droids.



DROIDS

Two types of robotic little helpers. The recon droids will search through the wreckage of any aliens you shoot down. The combat droids act as sentries in specific areas.



ARCHIVES

There's information here about the political situation, company policy and the base's operation. Read this – it may turn out to be rather more useful than it seems.

TURRET'S SYNDROME

Die Alien Scum part two occurs when you take manual control of the defence turrets.

These have to be kept reloaded and repaired before you can get your hands on the sights. When attacked, remember to bale out before they blow up.

Unless you want to roast in hell, that is.



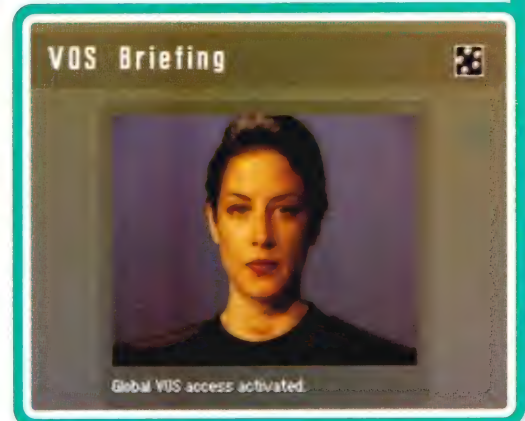
THEY'RE HERE!
THE ALIENS HAVE
INFILTRATED YOUR
BASE. RUN!



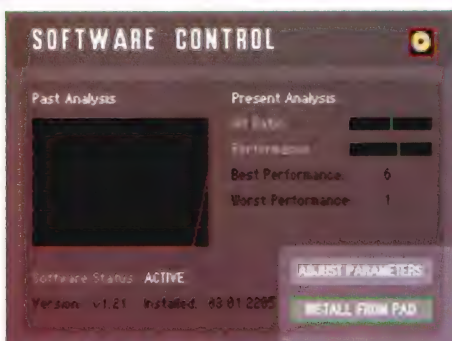
VOICE OF CALM

The VOS has a voice warning system which is audible throughout the base. It is essential to play *Defcon 5* with the volume up, as every important event is cued by this system. It's the sort of thing that could easily become annoying, but the voice is so sexy, I'm sure you won't mind it!

YOU CAN EXPECT
THE USUAL GLORIOUS
RENDERED CUT-SCENES
AS YOU GO.

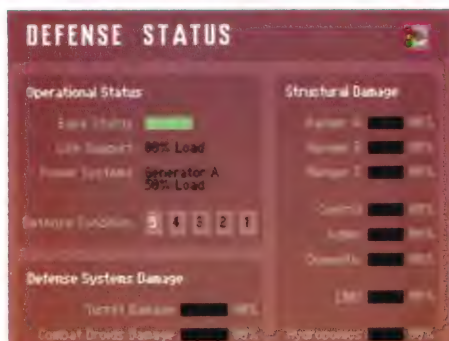


EVERY CORRIDOR IN *DEFCON 5* IS FILLED WITH VARIOUS DOORS AND HIDDEN DANGERS. BY ALL MEANS LOOK AROUND, BUT DON'T BE SURPRISED IF YOU GET MORE THAN YOU BARGAINED FOR. THEY'RE EVERYWHERE!



SOFTWARE

What you initially came to do – upload a new defence program. You seem to have all these efficiency statistics and parameter controls...this was supposed to be fun. Well you do want to get off this base, so work.



BASE STATUS

When things start to go pear-shaped, this gives you the story, with damage and repair stats. Eventually you may consider pulling the plug, unless the computer decides to do so first.



COMMS

You are video-linked to various support services, including a hysterical operator on the Mothership who is all for calling out the lifeboats. Somebody give that woman a slap!



PREVIEW

COMPANY	JVC
RELEASE	TBA
PRICE	TBA
PLAYERS	1
GENRE	ARCADE ADV.

SPLIT



wish you could be in the situation I'm in right now. I asked for information about this forthcoming JVC game, and the fax I received really does reinforce the general opinion that game plot should be limited to three or four lines of text. Any sentence beginning with the words "With the forces of darkness becoming stronger..." really does deserve a very deep hole in the ground; but that is (quite honestly and accurately) how *Split Realities* opens. It goes on to include such beauties as "...the beleaguered powers of light take to the field..." "this tyranny is being fought by a small band of rebels..." and "on board a small fishing vessel, a young man called Solo sees a huge bolt..." If ever there was a place to insert the abbreviation etc. etc. etc., it's here.

So what exactly should we expect? Well I'm buggered if I know, but judging from the screen shots we see before us, I don't think it would be entirely inaccurate to suggest that we could be in for a bit of the old 'Platform/Arcade' treatment. Instant comparisons to *Flashback* and *Prince of Persia* spring to mind, but experience indicates that to jump to early conclusions would be a foolish move. So there you are; I could have easily fobbed you off with the supplied bogus story, but as that rather peculiar soccer player says, "I'd rather play football".

THE AMAZING PENCIL MEN

With any game of this size, the game characters didn't just come into being overnight. Oh no, it takes several nights, not to mention a number of experiments before the final characters are decided on. As is always the way in *PlayStation Plus*, we like to let you in on the development of the characters from early sketches, so...er, here are some of them.



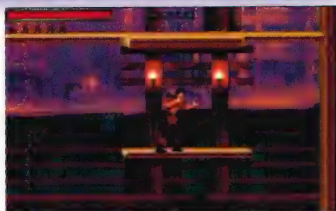
REALITIES



PREVIEW

DEAR DIARY..

Dear Diary, woke up this morning to find myself in a game called *Split Realities*. The press release didn't really tell me any thing, so I just stood in a heroic pose looking quite hard.



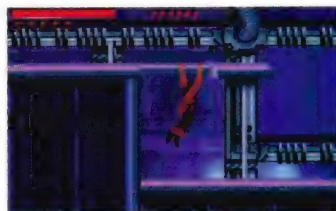
Without warning, some bald git in a skirt came along and kicked my head in. Understandably, I wasn't too happy about this.



Having only just recovered from the drag/slap-head, I was then accosted by a big monster-thing. Fortunately, I've just grown an extra arm from my stomach, and used this to hit him.



What with my application for *Gladiators* having been accepted, I then proceeded to the childrens' playground for a bit of training.



A strange man with a sack over his head then appeared, asking if I'd mind having a big stick put up me. I declined...



...only to run into an oriental armed with a coin-filled sock with a light bulb on the end. I tried the old "excuse me, your shoe lace is undone" trick. It didn't work.

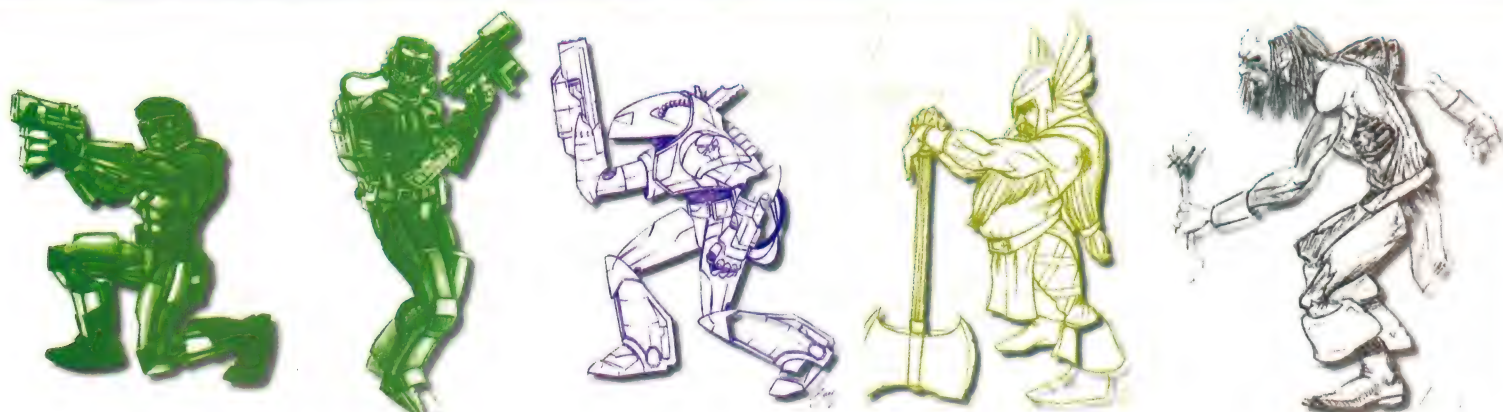
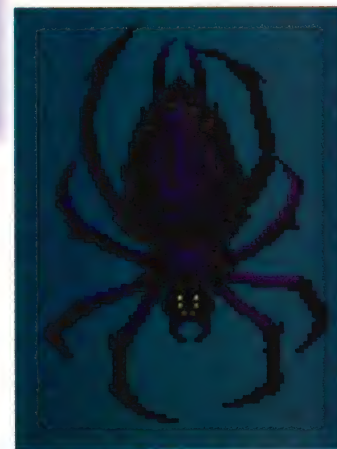


And to cap it all (as if I hadn't had a bad enough day already) Darth Vader accused me of stealing his helmet. And once he started bragging about his new watch, well, that was it. HI-YAH!



OO-ER!!

Though the general idea behind *Split Realities* seems familiar, one thing that does move towards separating this game from the others is the weird selection of monsters on offer. And, oh look, here's three now saying hello. How very convenient.



COMPANY	EA
RELEASE	NOVEMBER
PRICE	TBA
PLAYERS	1
GENRE	RACING



If there's one thing you can be sure of when a new machine is released, it's that most companies will rush to a) put out a revolutionary piece of software that not only shows off the hardware capabilities, but shows the company's commitment to the machine (e.g. *WipeOut*) or b) try to convert previous 'cash-cow' hits to the new machine as fast as bloody possibly. Ladies and gentlemen, please meet *Road Rash*.

I know that's a bit mean and cynical, but this is a straight conversion from the 3DO version that appeared about a year and a half ago. And what, you may ask, is wrong with that? Well nothing as far as I can see so, say I, stop being so negative and get on with things. Okay, if anybody here doesn't know *Road Rash* you've obviously been out of town for a decade or so, as it's one of the more lasting titles to have appeared on a number of machines over recent years. It's a fairly straight forwards bike racing game, but where the competitors can kick and punch each other as they go by. And that's about as complicated as it gets.

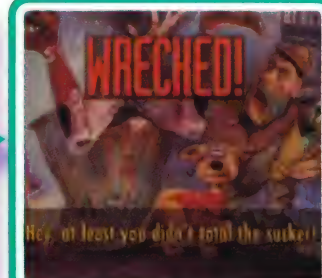
It's been a popular game (especial with its split-screen two-player mode, which is sadly lacking from this version) and being an identical product to the 3DO version of a year and a half back, features all the graphical niceties such as smooth animations and incidental FMV.

ROAD RASH



CRASHED AND BURNED

There are a variety of Full Motion Video sequences shown throughout *Road Rash*, so get nicked or crash your bike and you can expect to be humiliated with an attractive sequence. This one is particularly 'nice' as the driver of the offending car gets out, drags you out of his way, and then carries on. Git!



IT'S THE ROZZERS!



AH, THE TIMELESS WONDER OF THE ENGLISH COUNTRYSIDE. HELLO THERE. NICE DAY FOR A RIDE IS IT NOT? YOU WANT TO "KILL ME" YOU SAY. OH, I SEE.



AARRRGGG!! YOU BASTARD! AND WHAT'S WORSE, APART FROM SCRAPING ALL MY TEETH OUT ON THE ROAD, THERE'S A COPPER RIGHT BEHIND ME.



NO, HE'S NOT HAPPY. APPARENTLY I WAS CLOCKED AT ABOUT 200MPH AND NOW HE'S GOING TO HAVE TO TAKE ME IN FOR A BEATING.



"THIS IS FAT EAGLE TO NEST... FAT EAGLE TO NEST. PLEASE PREPARE THE FLENCING BLADES AND CHARGE UP THE NIPPLE ELECTRODE UNIT. I'M BRINGING ONE IN."



AND AS THERE DOESN'T APPEAR TO BE MUCH ROOM ON THIS SOLDIER OF THE LAW'S MIGHTY VEHICLE...

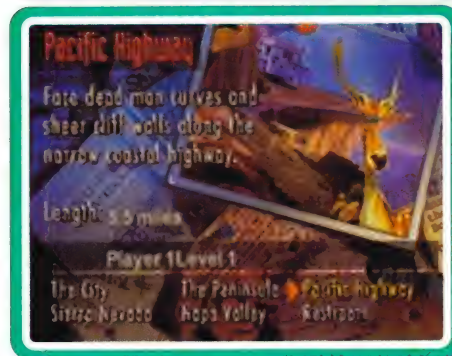


AARRRGGG!! YOU BASTARD... AGAIN! CALL MY LAWYER! CALL MY SURGEON! CALL MY MUMMY!!



BICYCLE RACE

You have a number of locations to chose from, complete with different hazards, such as on-coming cars and stupid digitised pedestrians.



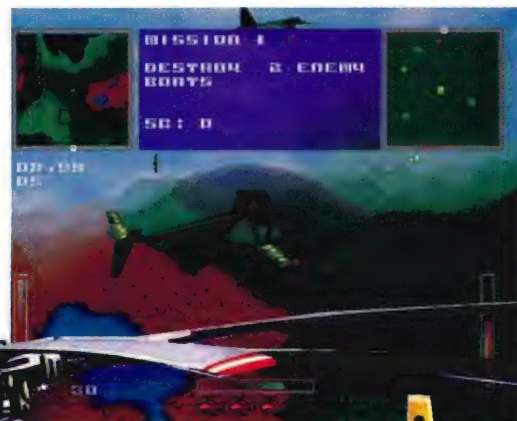
AFTERSHOCK

COMPANY	ELITE
RELEASE	MARCH
PRICE	TBA
PLAYERS	1-2
GENRE	SHOOT 'EM UP



A few years back, the BBC Micro played to host to one of the most innovative games to date. *Zarch* was a shoot 'em up which placed the player in a small spaceship out to destroy a virus polluting the land below. Although this doesn't sound all that original, *Zarch* broke new ground in that the player viewed their ship a la *Defender* and countless others, but the landscape was a 3D bitmap, allowing the player to fly around in any direction as opposed to the customary one or two fixed points. Since then, machines have obviously got more powerful and such techniques taken for granted — sadly, with play-ability often going the same way. *Aftershock*, however, intends mixing a state-of-the-art 3D engine with good, meat and potatoes playability, adding a decidedly 'green' bent to the plot.

The scenario, thinner than Karen Carpenter, has the evil Hex organisation planting the titular 'Aftershock' explosives around the world with the ultimate aim of blowing it up. Jumping into one of nine helicopters, the aim is to scour the texture-mapped landscapes, blasting the Hex forces into next week and collecting the triggered devices before they are detonated. Alternatively, sod the world and blow up a mate in the two-player mode.



BOMBASTIC

Aftershock is split into ten stages, with the bomb locations getting more far-ranging as the player progresses. The bombs' positions are marked on the player's radar, but surrounded by enemy vehicles — both ground and air-based — guarding them until detonation. Similarly, with time being of the essence in later stages, a modicum of strategy and forward-thinking is needed to plan the quickest route between the devices — while also taking into account the enemy positions surrounding them. Failure results in the world ending up like a segmented orange, but don't let that worry you, eh...

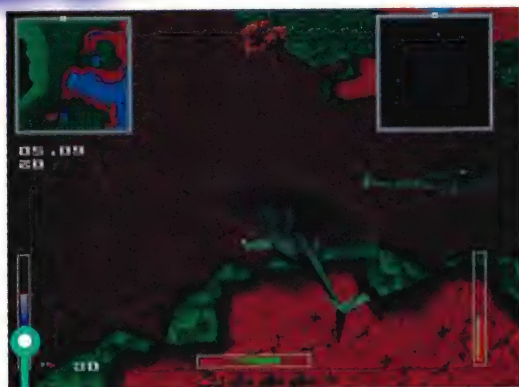


HOCK

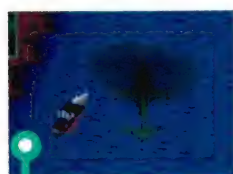


DUELLING BLADES

Aftershock's whirlybirds come in nine different varieties, each with differing handling, speed and payload storage. With the emphasis on arcade playability as opposed to true simulation, *Aftershock's* play screen displays essential information regarding altitude, weapon status, and a radar, with each chopper holding air-to-air missiles, air-to-ground missiles, bombs and smart bombs. Additional in-game information includes an overhead map, and a bar detailing the damage the to the ecology by the Hex machinations. The dog-fighting and piloting of the chosen helicopter is very simple indeed, with the usual directional controls sweeping and banking, while the four buttons control the weapons and the views available. Elite's programming team are very proud of their achievements within *Aftershock*, with the polygon-based landscape scaling at 50,000 texture-mapped polygons a second, alongside mist and cloud-layer effects. Similarly, the game can be viewed from any angle at any time, with the default views from within the chopper or from behind.



THE TOP-DOWN VIEW MAKES GAUGING ALTITUDE HARDER.



PANNING AWAY FROM THE CHOPPER FOR A BETTER VIEW.



MIST COVERS THE HORIZON, MAKING LOCATION OF ENEMY BASES PARTICULARLY HARD.



SMOKE TRAILS FROM THE OPPONENT'S HELICOPTER, AS YOU CLOSE IN FOR THE KILL.

COMPANY	INFOGRADES
RELEASE	JANUARY
PRICE	£39.99
PLAYERS	1-2
GENRE	ADVENTURE



Alone in the Dark made its debut on the PC and was much admired for its

involving gameplay and noiristic atmosphere, two factors that went to make it a big success. So successful in fact that a sequel soon followed. Its arrival on the PlayStation heralds a fusing of both the original and its sequel, coming with the subheading *Jack's Back*. Jack is actually One-Eyed Jack, a bootlegger and a smuggler — I suppose that's all he could be with a name like that — and, being a mean sort, has decided to kidnap an innocent child. Set in the 'Roaring Twenties' and situated along a stretch of coast in California known as 'Hell's Kitchen', this adventure sees the player take the role of Edward Carnby, a slick yet disgruntled sort of guy who's out to revenge Jack's murder of an old chum of his, and save the little girl at the same time. Carrying a pistol or whatever else happens to turn up, the aim is simply to explore the mansion and gardens that occupy this bleak spot, checking for clues to the whereabouts of Jack and little Grace and killing anyone who looks at you even a little oddly.

Mixing 3D action with some tough puzzles, *Alone in the Dark* fits into the same tradition as *Fade to Black*, although it's set for release a bit earlier in time to catch the Christmas business. For now, these pictures should throw a bit of light on things.



FILL THIS HANDSOME CHAP FULL OF LEAD AND HE FALLS TO HIS KNEES.

ALONE in



BODY SEARCH

As Eddie, it's important that you keep your eyes peeled for whatever's been left by a dead corpse or hidden in cupboards, wardrobes and the like. Pick up everything and put it in the inventory because sooner or later it's going to come in handy. What quickly makes itself apparent is the need to have a good stash of weapons and ammo on you because there are plenty of low types eager rub you out.



THE DARK

THE BIG CREEP

To enhance the atmosphere of seedy suspense characteristic of all those black and white detective thrillers, Infogrames have seen to it that *Alone in the Dark* is 'shot' from lots of low angles and uses cinematic 'editing', as well as containing some creepy surprises. Is it at the expense of the gameplay? Well, *Alone in the Dark* doesn't pretend to be a fast

moving action game, and first impression suggest that this style fits the pace of the game effectively, building a sense of excitement as you shuffle furtively round a corner, or pace unsteadily down an eerie corridor with only the echo of your footsteps for company.

THE CHILD IN CRIME



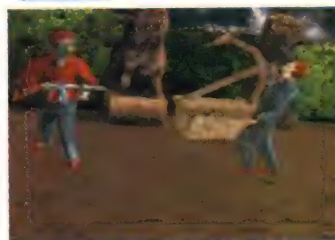
Although you spend much of your time as Edward Carnby, he isn't the only role take on. There's Grace, the little girl who you're trying to rescue. Not quite the helpless child you might think, it's up to you to help her escape from the bedroom she's been locked in and go exploring about about the house. There were complaints from certain quarters about the inclusion of this in the action, the crux of it being that it was distasteful to depict a child caught in such peril, left only to the mercy of criminals. The complexities of the moral issues involved in situations such as this are well known, but there's nothing like a storm in a tea cup for a bit of publicity eh?



ONE-EYE JACK'S SMUGGLING SHIP GOES UP IN FLAMES!



THE GHOST OF A GIANT TURBOT CLOSES IN!





FEATURE



MORTAL BELOVED

Three years ago a gaming legend was born. Smashing aside *Street Fighter* and its many clones, Midway's *Mortal Kombat* bloodied the nose of its rival as it introduced gore and bloodletting to an otherwise 'safe' genre. With a movie based on its many characters playing in cinemas across the country and with numerous spin-off and merchandising clamouring for the *MK* fans' cash, the *Mortal Kombat* hype is far from exhausted. And as we review the PlayStation-bound second and third entries to the series, we go behind the scenes on the many spinoffs of what is surely the most infamous game of our time.



roughly three years ago, the fighting game genre had become virtually exhausted. The *Street Fighter* series had seen to that, and the 3D happenings of *Tekken* and *Toh Shin Den* were but a Sony technical bod's wet dream. After Capcom's masterpiece had wowed arcade-goers with its dozen characters and numerous special moves, it seemed the rest of the pack could only mimic their attentions. SNK's *Samurai Shodown* was more of the same with swords, and the same company's *Fatal Fury* series had become an in-bred rehash with the same recurring characters offering very little originality. As Data East and even Capcom consequently failed to breathe new life into the listless genre, the interest which had sold a thousand Super NES consoles and saw millions of 50p pieces stuffed into coin slots started to wane. Instead, revitalising the genre fell to Midway developers, John Tobias and Ed Boon, who added the one obvious thing missing from *Street Fighter* and its kin: blood. Ironically, Capcom, SNK and co had consciously avoided blood in their games for fear of incurring the wrath of the censors.

But, no. The *Mortal Kombat* coin-op had seven fighters smashing pints of the red stuff out of each other and, in keeping with the anally-retentive traits reserved for arcade-goers, featured secret moves which, via a secret combination of button pressed and stick wagging, made the on-screen combatants rip each others' spines out or char them to a crispy corpse as a finale to the battle. These bloody additions – christened 'Fatalities' – and sprites digitised using real actors made the game a huge hit. *Mortal Kombat* had arrived. As it reaches its third instalment, and with a film doing the rounds as you read this, it just refuses to go away...

MORTAL KOMBAT



GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS: INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS: THREE

RELEASE NOVEMBER

PRICE £49.99

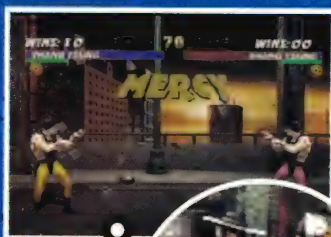
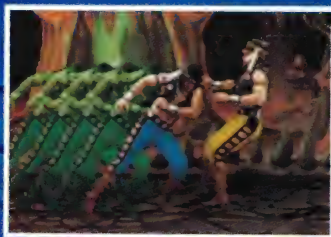
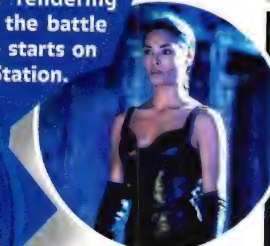
BY SONY

PLAYERS 1-2



Just as *Mortal Kombat II* offered more characters, attack possibilities and death moves than its predecessor, *Mortal Kombat III* brings even more Kombatants and grue into the tried 'n' tested formula. For any *Mortal* virgins out there, the trilogy revolves around an evil deity called Shao Kahn who summons the universe's greatest warriors into his Outworld dimension for a battle royale. The winner then gets to have a pop at Kahn himself. Within the games-playing world, these scraps have become a bit of an annual event, with *MKII* gracing the 16bit consoles this time last year, and the PlayStation the first 32bit machine to unveil a conversion of the third in the series.

This third *MK* outing takes place on an Earth shattered by Kahn's invading armies. The human race has been virtually suppressed apart from, in best Asterix the Gaul fashion, an indomitable corner of resistance. Within this gang, Kombatants from *MKII* including Jax, Rayden and Liu Kang join forces with newcomers Stryker and Nightwolf, while Sonya and Kano — heroes of the 1990 original — are back by popular demand. And with old heroes returning, Midway unveil a series of new villains (including two clone robots, and the female equivalent of *MK's* four-armed 'boss', Goro), and old faves like Sub-Zero. Thus, with the 2D levels undergoing a fresh lick of paint and assorted rendering touches, the battle for Earth starts on the PlayStation.



USING THE 'MERCY' OPTION GIVES THE LOSER EXTRA ENERGY, AND ALLOWS THE USE OF AN ANIMALITY.



KANO'S KNIFE UPPERCUT.

CODE MASTERS

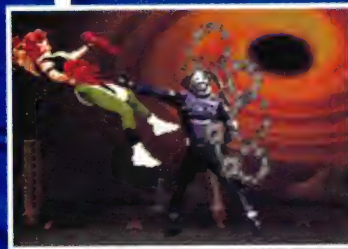
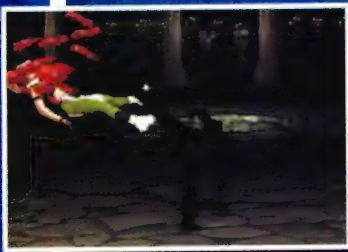
Hidden cheats and tactics are an integral part of *Mortal Kombat III*, and in an attempt to monopolise on this, Ed Boon and John Tobias incorporated a code system into the coin-op which has been recreated for this Sony version — with the codes cross-pollinating between the two versions. The codes are entered at the start of a bout when the Vs screen of the two kombatants appears. The six-digit codes are based on icons lifted from the game, and assorted combinations can add minor effects such as leaving the two characters to fight in the dark or hide the energy bars, or dramatically change the game's difficulty level by disabling throws or halving your opponent's energy bar. By far the strangest code, though, removes the fighting sequences entirely, replacing them with a relatively gentle game of Galaga!



SUB-ZERO FACES LIU KANG...



KAHN'S GUARDS TRAP EARTH'S LAST HOPE.



THE GRAPHICALLY-STUNNING
MOTARO SPRITE.

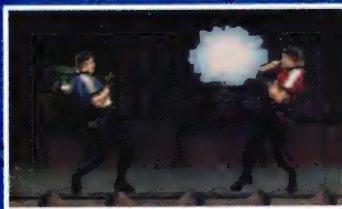
SMOKE CAN KILL

A continuing trait from the first two games, *Mortal Kombat III* contains a host of hidden characters only accessible via a tres difficile series of moves and actions. Returning from *Mortal Kombat II* are Noob Saibot (an amalgamation of Ed Boon and John Tobias' surnames: backwards), Motaro the Centaur, and Smoke, who is the secret character residing in the square at the centre of the player select screen. Interestingly enough, though, of all the hidden characters, Smoke is the only one available for the payer to control, although the means of getting him to reveal himself as a full character is a very long process indeed. Other *MKIII* rumours also include stories of Kitana and Mileena from the second game returning, but having seen the full sheet of codes for the game it can be proved as utter nonsense.

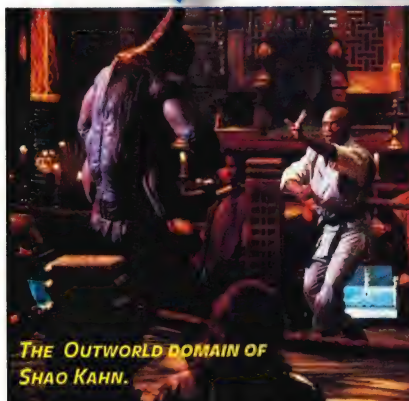
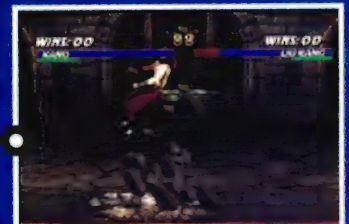


COMMENT

STEVE Of all the arcade beat 'em ups (and there are hundreds), *MKIII* is one of the most frenetic. It offers more special moves and combinations than any other of its kind, and this conversion features all the secrets and features which won it a legion of arcade-going fans. Quite simply, *MKIII* on the PlayStation is a nigh-on perfect conversion. All the characters, hidden komatants and cheats of the original have survived the transition, and the huge sprites and intricate backdrops wouldn't look out of place in a dingy arcade. Midway's conversion is flawless, but as such any faults of the original coin-op make the trip to the Sony machine, too. Thus, despite three huge towers and differing difficulty levels, the action can prove a tad repetitive at times — no matter how many combinations of codes you may find. However, for those tiring of *Tekken* and in need of high-speed thrills, *Mortal Kombat III* provides more action than a dozen Jackie Chan films and is, as such, highly recommended.



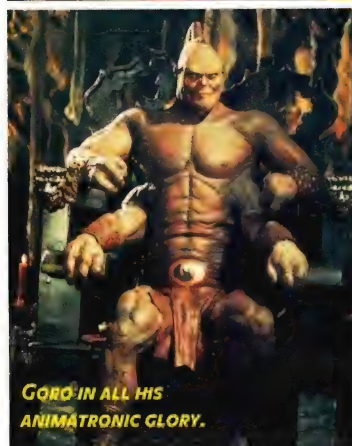
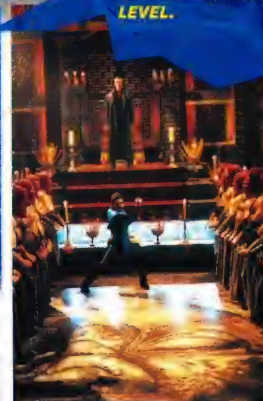
AN UPPERCUT TO THE HIGHER
LEVEL.



THE OUTWORLD DOMAIN OF
SHAO KAHN.



JAX'S CAMEO
APPEARANCE.



GORO IN ALL HIS
ANIMATRONIC GLORY.



I WENT OUT WITH A GIRL
WHO COULD DO THAT...

THE FILM

Following the atrocity that was *Street Fighter: The Movie*, First Independent were taking a huge risk with their *Mortal Kombat* film. However, on its opening week in the US chart it knocked *Apollo 13* from its premiere position and duly remained there for nearly a month — not bad for a film with no A-team stars within its cast. In fact, throughout *Mortal Kombat: The Movie*, Highlander star, Christopher Lambert, is the only recognisable face as he intermittently pops up as Rayden (God of Thunder) to preside over the many fights which form the film's plot. Somehow, though, *Mortal Kombat* hangs together a lot better than the awful Van Damme *Street Fighter* effort. Fans of the game will love the game references, from the use of the dragon head logo everywhere to the special moves instantly recognisable from the games. Most of the game characters pop up, too, with Liu Kang and Sonya the mainstays of the story, but with Jax, Kano and even an animatronic Goro also putting in a show. It's by no means the best film out and certainly won't be remembered come Oscar time, but if you've had a skinful and fancy a laugh, give it a go.



FRIENDSHIP

BABALITY

SPECIALS

ANIMALITY

FATALITY2

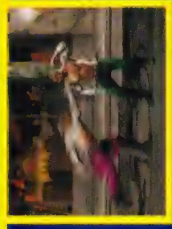
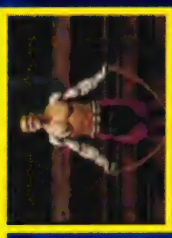
FATALITY1



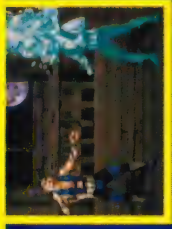
SHANG TSUNG



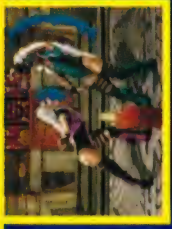
SECTOR



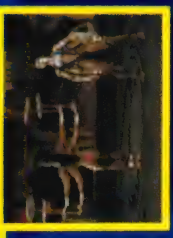
JAX



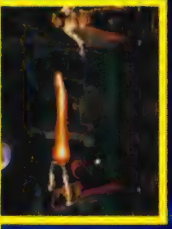
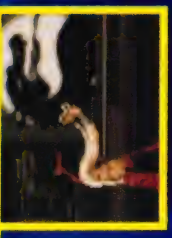
SUB-ZERO



SINDEL



SHEEVA



LIU KANG



SOUL SUCK

SPIKE BED

CRUSHER

FLAMER

SLICE

BIG FOOT

ICE SMASH

FREEZE BREATH

SCREAM

HAIR COIL

POUNDING

RIPSKIN

BURN OUT

COIN-OP

'FINISH HIM...'

MKIII's fourteen Kom-batants have access to two Fatalities, an Animality, a Babality and a Friendship each. Following the defeat of your foe, a guttural voice invites you to 'Finish Him.' A complex series of pad moves and button presses will then access a hidden code, effecting one of the said 'Alities. However, things are complicated in that some moves cannot be accessed if a punch was used during a bout or if the victor hasn't been merciful...

						
NIGHTWOLF	LIGHT BEAM	LIGHTNING				
						
KUNG LAO	HAT SLICE	TORNADO				
						
CYRA	SELF DSTRUCT	HELL-SLICE				
						
SONYA	CRUSHER	KISS OF DEATH				
						
KANO	SKELETON GRAB	EYE LASER				
						
STRYKER	BOMB	TASER				
						
KABAL	SCARE	INFLATE				



CHICKEN KOMBO

Capcom's *Street Fighter* has a lot to answer for – most notably the now widely-recognised 'Special Moves' and 'Combo' sequences. Never to be out done, *MKIII* arms each character with a host of projectile-based specials, fancy throws and head stomps which make Julian Dicks look tame in comparison. But it is in the 'Killer Kombo' department where *MKIII* really leaves the Capcom game standing. Players are armed with two strengths of punches and kicks and carefully strung together volleys of these can decimate an unsuspecting opponent's energy. As the player grows more proficient flurries of punches and special moves can be unleashed to literally KO a foe before they get a chance to block. Kool.

IN A NICE NEW TOUCH, THE CHARACTERS REEL AWAY FROM KOMBO ATTACKS.



(NON) ESSENTIAL READING

With such colourful characters continually smashing the shite out of each other, if one aspect of *Mortal Kombat* merchandising was a certainty, it was a comic book. US inksters Malibu Comics were quick to oblige with the continuing *Blood & Thunder* series where heroes of the first two games come face to face with Kahn and his *MKII* minions. There's not a huge plot as such, but Sonya and Kano go to Outworld to stop Kahn's invasion plans, while Sub-Zero and Scorpion continually goad and scrap each other, and Goro just growls and... well, fights a lot, too. *Watchmen* it ain't. If you are a die-hard *MK* fan, however, and may have missed these subtle cartoon delicacies, Titan Books are in the process of compiling the entire *Blood & Thunder* series in one book, which should be available by the time you read this, priced £7.95.



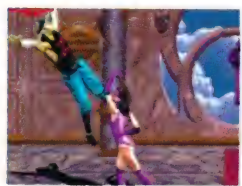
COMMENT

ROB

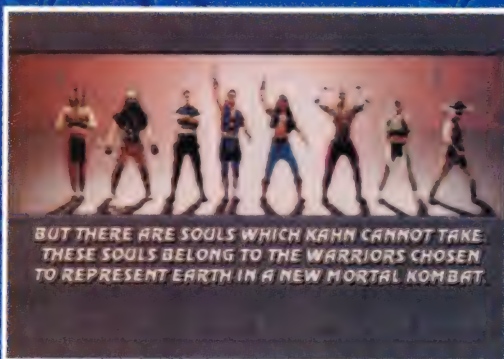
Somewhere along the line, I have been missed all the *Mortal Kombat* hype. My interest has been barely ignited by the promises of gore and 'Fatalities', so I come to this PlayStation version with no preconceptions. Thus, ignoring the hype, it comes to *Mortal Kombat III* to impress me by the standards of its playability alone. Which it does perfectly. Yes, there are indeed countless ways to dissect and incinerate the oddball characters offered, but the actual fighting is far more involving. Fast flurries of punches and kicks make for a game which leaves the sluggish *Street Fighter* well in the shade, and for every attack move, there is a block of retaliation on offer making for a very balanced game. With gameplay like this, *MKIII*'s graphics and extras are just icing on a very tasty cake indeed.

AND THEN THERE WERE TWO

Logically enough, before *MKIII* there was *MKII*. But not on the PlayStation. In the strange world of sequels, Sony's Midway-produced *MKIII* has beaten Acclaim's forthcoming *MKII* conversion by several months. So is it still worth Acclaim pumping out what is surely a weaker game than *III*? Well, according to Acclaim, yes. Probe's conversion of *MKII* to the PlayStation is the first arcade-perfect home edition yet. Also, they argue that it still offers as many secrets and much of the playability of the third game, along with characters now missing from the third instalment. Having seen Probe's conversion running we'd be inclined to agree – it really is very good – but just how *Mortal Mental* is Joe Public and his missus?



SUB-ZERO'S ICE DECOY FREEZES HIS CLONE OPPONENT AS HE VENTURES TOO CLOSE.



RATING

92

91

90

71

90

90

OVERALL

GRAPHICS

ANIMATION

SOUND FX

MUSIC

LASTABILITY

PLAYABILITY

90



SONY SEGA Nintendo IBM PC 3DO NEC ATARI SNK

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Presents

HERE'S
TOBY

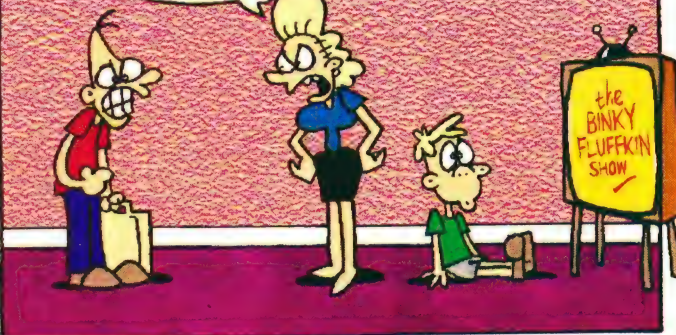
OH BOY OH BOY OH BOY! I CAN'T WAIT TO TRY OUT MY NEW SONY PLAYSTATION!



I JUST BOUGHT IT FROM THE BEST GAMES SHOP IN THE KNOWN UNIVERSE - THE COMPUTER EXCHANGE! YEE - HAW!

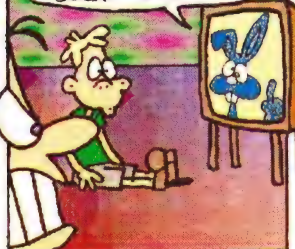
BUT...

SORRY TOBY, YOUR LITTLE BROTHER'S WATCHING HIS FAVOURITE PROGRAMME. YOU'LL HAVE TO WAIT.



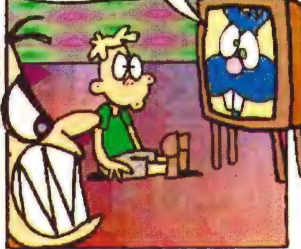
HALF AN HOUR LATER...

THEN BINKY HAD AN IDEA. "C'MON GANG," HE SAID, "LET'S METHODICALLY COUNT ALL THE DAISES IN THE MEADOW, ONE BY ONE!" AND SO, THEY ALL BEGAN TO COUNT...



TWO HOURS LATER...

"THERE'S ANOTHER ONE" SAID HENRY HEDGEHOG. "SO THAT MAKES IT SIX THOUSAND, FOUR HUNDRED AND NINETY TWO," SAID BINKY. "BUT THERE'S STILL MORE TO GO"



TWELVE WEEKS LATER...

"I DO BELIEVE WE'VE LOST COUNT", SIGHED BINKY, "WE'D BETTER START ALL OVER AGAIN"



OH GOD. NOW I'VE BROKEN THE TV. I WONDER IF THAT OLD BIDDY NEXT DOOR'LL LET ME USE HERS?



USE ME TELEVISION? OF COURSE YOU CAN, SONNY!

COR. THANKS!



IF YOU WEREN'T SO WIZENED AND SAGGY-LOOKING I'D DAMN WELL KISS YOU!

YOU DON'T MIND IF I FINISH WATCHING ME SOAP OPERA FIRST, DO YOU?



WHY NO, NOT AT ALL...

HEY BRAD - WHAT'RE YOU DOING?

MEMORISING THE PHONE BOOK. FANCY GIVING ME A HAND?



NO WORRIES, MATE...

THREE CENTURIES LATER...

OKAY, WHERE ARE WE UP TO?



FORTY NINE MILLINIA LATER...

WAIT A MINUTE - THIS IS LAST YEAR'S PHONE BOOK!

WE'LL HAVE TO START AGAIN



AND... HEY! PRISON AIN'T SO BAD! I'VE GOT MY PLAYSTATION, AND I CAN GET ALL THE GAMES I WANT FROM THE COMPUTER EXCHANGE ORDERING SERVICE - AND THEY LET ME PART EXCHANGE!



THE COMMUNAL SHOWERS AREN'T QUITE AS MUCH FUN, BUT WE WON'T GO INTO THAT RIGHT NOW...



We're the bloody best.

VISIT OUR GAMING BRANCHES:

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LONDON W1P 1AD
OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK
(0171) 636 2666

282 STATION ROAD, HARROW,
MIDDX, HA1 2EA
OPEN MON - SAT
(0181) 427 5800

GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: HARD
CONTINUOUS: INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS: 3

RELEASE NOVEMBER

PRICE £44.99

BY SCE

PLAYERS 1-2



If there's one thing that features in every big boy's dream — apart from riding helicopters and

Pamela Anderson (and yes I did mean for it to read like that) — it's driving around in an indestructible tank. Crushing Volvo drivers and Minis alike, who could truthfully say that they wouldn't love an enormous metal box on wheels, armed with the latest in missiles, lasers, high-tech defences, and futuristic toys. Well not me for sure, and that's why I was particularly happy to receive *Assault Rigs* to review.

Assault Rigs contains a number of elements we've seen hundreds of times before — collect a set number of gems to activate the exit, collect various power-ups and weapon add-ons as you go, kill the bad guys before they kill you, etc. However, by inventing an interesting scenario and implementing a novel control method, Sony have made a new game out of old material. The various levels come at you in easy to swallow sections; some very easy to complete, some taking hours and hours to suss out. You can select from three different craft for each level, along with a choice of three difficulty levels, so the player interested in speed at the cost of armour can customise to his heart's content.

ASSAULT RIGS

WHAT A GEM!

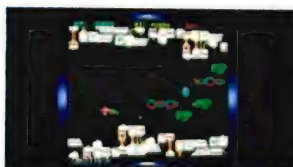
Apart from staying alive long enough to get from one end to the other, the whole point of each *Assault Rigs* level is to collect a set amount of gems to activate the exit block. The read-out

at the top of the screen shows how many are left (in both cases shown here I've only got one so far — DOH!) but quite often you'll find a number together to help you out. Just like here. Phew.



WHAT A GREAT START!

I think the word I'm looking for here is "WOW!" The intro sequence for *Assault Rigs* is (as always seems the case with Psygnosis/Sony products) bloody brilliant. It starts off giving you a brief history of arcade games, from *Ping*, through to horizontal shoot 'em ups, and up to the first 'seek and destroy' Virtual Reality games. It then takes you into the future, where a stunning rendered young lady (with quite superb, er... front appendages) jogs up and into a completely enclosed VR module. You then get to watch her playing a VR level from the game. It's gorgeous, it's sexy, and it's worth watching.



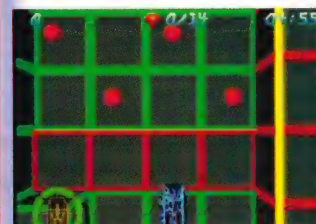
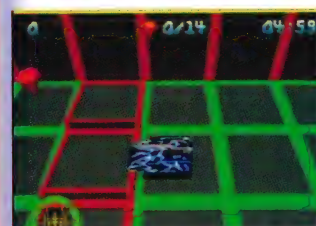
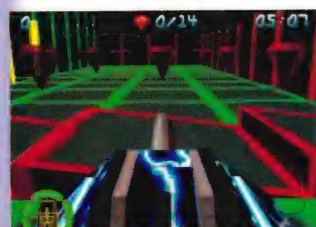
GAMERS WILL BE PLEASED TO KNOW THAT THERE'S A PASS-WORD SYSTEM EMPLOYED, ALLOWING THE PLAYER TO JUMP STRAIGHT INTO THE LAST INCOMPLETE LEVEL. AND, EVEN BETTER, I'VE GOT ALL THE CODES AND YOU DON'T. HA!



REVIEW

POINTS OF VIEW

Assault Rigs offers not one, not two, not three, not four, but FIVE! Yes, five different views to watch the action from. They vary in effectiveness depending upon the situation, so while the first-person perspective is excellent for targeting distant enemies, the overhead view is much better for negotiating mazes. Here, go on and have a little look for yourselves.



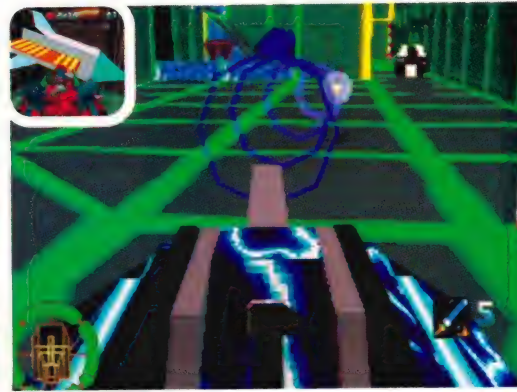
GUNS GUNS GUNS!

My, what a lot of Mr Men there are. Still, never mind that toss, take a look at some of the brilliant weapons that are on offer in *Assault Rigs*!



MINI-GUN

Though each shell from this gun is less powerful than standard shells (because of the speed of release) it is deadly at close quarters. It also comes with a handy 250 rounds of ammo.



GUIDED MISSILE

As the name suggests, these little beauties lock on to the nearest enemy in sight and home in. However, should their flight path take them near an enemy that was not initially visible, it'll will alter course and attack the new target.



SENTRY GUNS

One of the few guns actually on your side. Drop these where ever you fancy, and watch as they attack enemy rigs. They fire just like mini-guns, but with twice the damage. Very nice indeed.



SHATTER SHELLS

Another excellent weapon for clearing heavily populated areas, this red bullet fires forward, but on impact splits into eight separate projectiles that act like bounce ammo. You can also make the bullet split before impact by pressing fire while it's still in flight.



AUTO TURRET

This is extremely handy for any levels featuring wide, open spaces chock full of bad guys. It allows you to drive around as normal, but the turret automatically targets the nearest enemy unit. Unfortunately, it only lasts for a limited period of time.



MIGHT AS WELL JUMP!

It's not all flat surfaces and gentle lifts in *Assault Rigs*. Oh no, many of the levels have jumps that need to be approached with as much speed as possible. Some levels even make it so that you can't get to the exit unless to take to the skies. *GERONIMO!*



I WANTED TO SHOW YOU THIS LEVEL BECAUSE IT'S BRILLIANT. IT'S A HUGE ARENA CHOCK-FULL OF GEMS, POWER-UPS, AND ENEMIES. LOOK AT ALL THOSE LOVELY BAUBLES!



I'LL GET YOU!

Assault Rigs starts out incredibly easy, with the first five levels being nothing more than training runs, but once you get to about level ten the bad guys start getting distinctly nasty.

SINGLE SENTRY GUN

These are the most basic static guns, and vary in appearance, intelligence, strength, and armour. Their reaction times also vary, so don't take too long working out what to do with them.



DOUBLE SENTRY GUN

Pretty obviously, this is exactly the same as the single sentry gun — only double trouble!



MISSILE SENTRY GUN

These are right gits, especially when in a crowd (isn't it always the way) as they fire guided missiles at the player. Your only option here is to either react quickly and avoid them, or shoot them down. The best weapon for this is the rapid mini-gun.

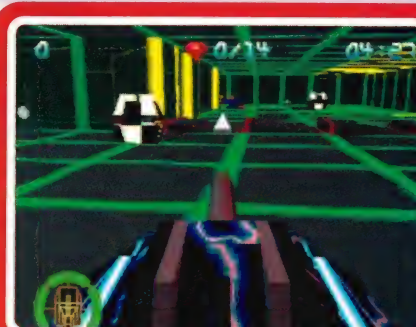


MORTAR

These are less dangerous than the missile launchers, but only in as much as they fire indirectly at the player. Their tracking accuracy varies, but they're often positioned at the tops of lifts and raised structures as the impact can knock you off platforms. Oh, and they look like cement mixers.



It's hidden away here, but these standard tanks are persistent if nothing else. They're not particularly tough, but they regenerate quickly, and are fiddly distractions.



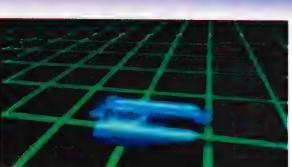
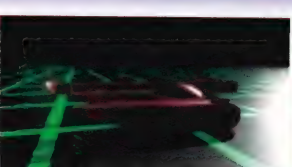
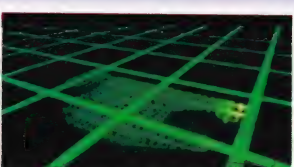
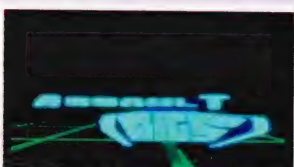
I don't know what these 'Spinning Jenny' things are, but they spin, spit bullets, and take a right truck load of bullets before exploding. Better to avoid these buggers if you ask me.



This little bulldozer-thing is a right old git, and no mistakin'. It doesn't shoot at you, preferring to just shunt you about the place, making life difficult and inflicting niggly damage. You always find these near ledges and tricky balancing platforms. And in the kitchen at parties.



This little drilling machine looks a bit like the space ship from the original black and white *Buck Rogers* flicks, but it's really nothing more than haemorrhoid on wheels. It drills right up your box, gets in your way, and takes valuable energy from your shields. It also takes about six thousand shots to kill.



COMMENT

STEVE

The concept behind *Assault Rigs* dates back to the first Atari VCS game, *Combat*, where two tanks try to blow each other apart within a variety of mazes. *Assault Rigs* drops the old bird's-eye view in favour of the tres fashionable 3D and all the latest weapons, but at the end of the day what we have here is a good, simple blast. But perhaps a little bit too simple. While blowing up turrets and opposing vehicles is fun in the short time, the lack of variety soon becomes a sticking point. The programmers have valiantly tried to counter this with some really tortuous mazes, but even so *Assault Rigs* still becomes a bit of a chore at times. As a game which is picked up every now and then for a quick blast, *Assault Rigs* is a gem. But long-term play doesn't really bring any rewards, hence the score.

PS2

REVIEW



Quickly! Get a post card and a glass. These spider tanks are nothing more than standard tank with legs, but I don't like 'em. They give me the willies.



Ah! More baddies of the 'Spinning Jenny' variety. I don't think this one is any different to the first apart from in appearance, but I liked the look of it, so here it is.



Oo-er, now we're getting into major baddie territory. These are floating skull head-things, and carry a variety of weapons. This one has guns, but you can expect to encounter laser-carrying versions too. They float, they dodge, they shoot...



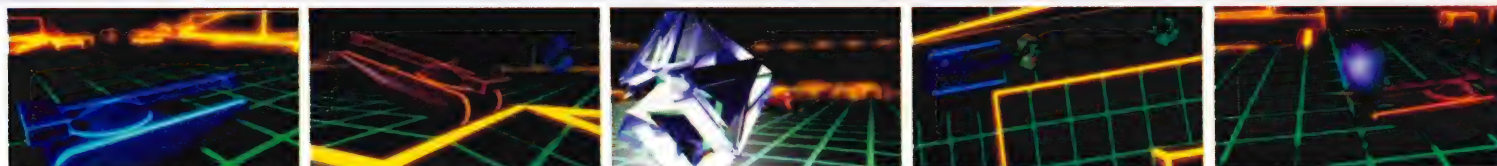
I've entitled this picture 'Little Red Tank'. Unfortunately, the title is a lot more cute than the tank deserves, because it's a pain in the buttocks to be sure. As always, just press the fire button for instant relief.



More insectoid creations, this time in the form of a sort of crab-ish mine laying device. You don't seem to be able to kill these creepy-crawlies, and they crap mines out like there's no tomorrow. Time for some strategic mine shooting.



Who do you think you are kidding Mr Hitler? This is a huge homing missile attractively shaped after a doodle bug. Anyone for a blitz?



DO YOU HAVE THIS IN BLUE?

Though their appearance changes depending upon the character of the level (ie: *Tron*-esque cyber-tanks for the VR levels, and mobile tin pots for the World Wars) there are basically three varieties of tank available to the player. The first is a small tank; very fast but very weak. The second is the complete opposite, with thick armour but a lumbering speed. And the third is a compromise, with average attributes all round.

FUTURE



STANDARD



VR



WORLD WAR



NOBODY HERE BUT US BOXES!

Hello, what's this then? Well, rather a handy icon now you ask. Collect this and you'll have a handy disguise at the touch of a button.

One minute you can see me...



And now you can't! All system defences ignore me while I'm wearing this, and enemy tanks just see me as a solid block. Until I start shooting that is.



MANY OF THE LEVELS IN ASSAULT RIGS CALL FOR PRECISION USE OF BRAKING SKILLS, WITH VERY SMALL FLYING PLATFORMS BEING YOUR ONLY WAY FORWARD. THIS IS AN EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY TO USE THE OVERHEAD VIEW. ER... JUST LIKE I HAVEN'T HERE. DOH!



RATING

85

80

81

80

81

82

OVERALL

81

GRAPHICS

ANIMATION

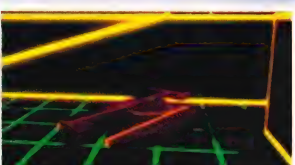
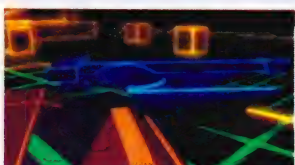
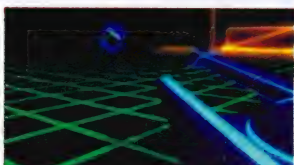
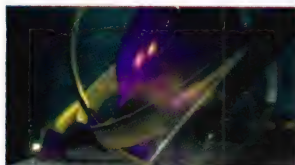
SOUND FX

MUSIC

PLAYABILITY

MATT

Assault Rigs has proved to be incredibly hard to mark. Initially I was very impressed with the look of the game, and though there are a few glitches as the camera desperately tries to keep background objects out of your way (no easy task for sure) the graphics remain lovely throughout. I particularly like the way the tank reforms itself depending upon which weapon you choose, and the various weapons' effects are also tres pleasant. There's an attractive selection of both tanks and level styles to wander through, with imaginative new adversaries popping up as you progress. The game content, however, never really develops, and though it hardly cripples the game, it ultimately seems a bit of a waste. The puzzle element is never pushed particularly hard, with only a few real head-scratching moments, and most of this being of the 'where shall I push this block?' variety. There are a few things I'm not particularly keen on, with the main groan being the way the turrets regenerate a few seconds after you kill them. Though I realise the game would be too easy if everything cleared instantly, the odd breather can lead to more enjoyable exploration. Still, the game is enjoyable, challenging, and fun — though, sadly, slightly repetitive.



GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: VARIABLE
CONTINUES: N/A
SKILL LEVELS: THREE

RELEASE NOVEMBER

PRICE £39.99

BY OCEAN

PLAYERS 1-4

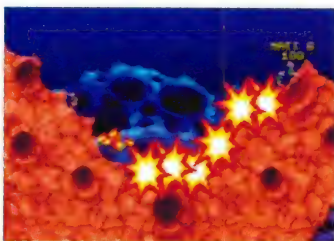


favourite game often played during my 'Amiga Years' was a simple Public Domain offering called *TANX*.

Very simply, two tanks sat facing each other on a mountain range, with the players taking it in turns to try and hit each other. Each player set the angle of trajectory for the turret, along with the power of shot. You pressed the fire button, watched how close you were, and then hoped you got it right next time. It was a simple idea but, being a two-player game, was excellent fun.

This idea was built upon over the years, with more elaborate weapons (scatter bombs, nukes, etc.) and more versatile tanks trundling and even flying around the landscapes. Oh yes. And then came the *Worms*...

A real fairy tale story, *Worms* was written by a young lad huddled away in his bedroom, taken along to the Team 17 lads at an industry show, and signed up a scant few minutes later. It's still nothing more than a beefed-up *TANX*, but features the lovable and beautifully characterised Worms, along with their colourful graphics and amusing sound effects. Weapons border on the surreal and silly, and nice touches such as being able to name your worm teams and have tons of mates battling it out at the same time means that *Worms* will be an excellent 'gang' game. As for whether it will stand up as a one-player... well, what say we go have a look see?



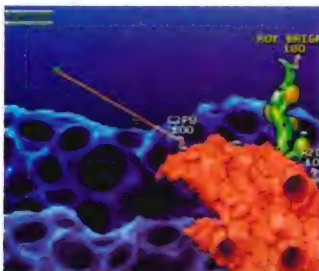
Which I then shove right up our very own Oz Brown's behind. Hurrah!

WORMS

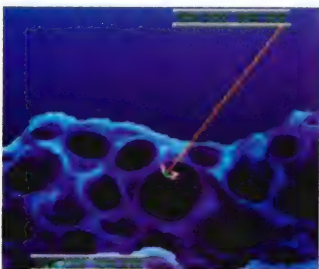
A PROBLEM? I DON'T THINK SO



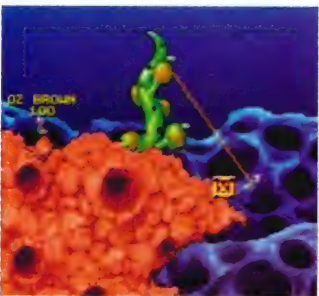
This was an empty valley, with C-3PO wanting to get across. No problem. First we'll zoom out and construct a few girders in mid-air...



Then we'll use the ninja rope to swing across to the next ledge.



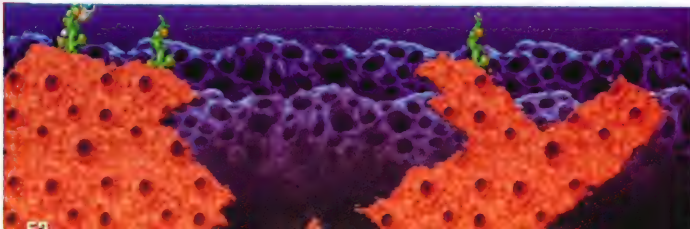
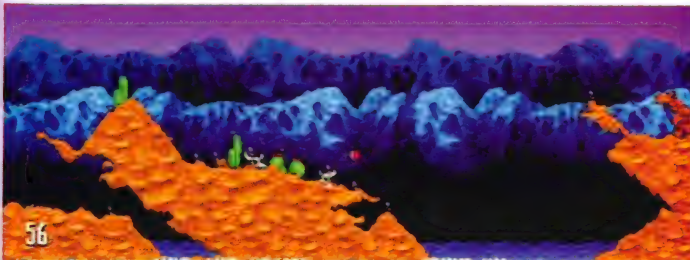
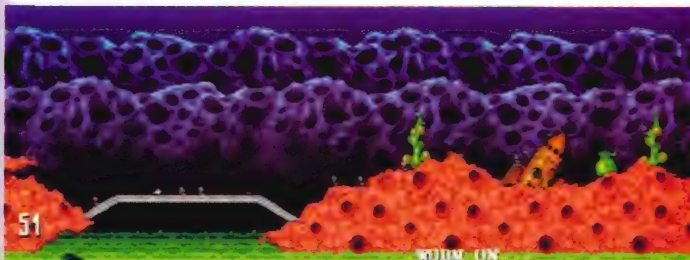
Then on to the next girder.



And finally into the sought-after weapons crate, which contains an extra Airstrike.

PICTURE THIS

There are a number of landscape types to play over in *Worms*. Though some of them are nothing more than graphical alternatives, some do actually have unique attributes. On the Martian surface you can expect to experience low gravity, while the Arctic wastes have extra slippery slopes to fall off. Other levels include a sandy beach, lush tropics, a car scrap yard (with nasty disguised mines), Hades (!), a tree-filled forest, an alien planet, a desert, and even a 'Candy World'.



The thing that distinguishes *Worms* from the tens of other *TANX* clones that have appeared over the years, is the imaginative use of interesting weapons and their accompanying graphical effects. Yes, you do have standard a Uzi 9mm, and bazooka, but you can also perform dragon punches and fireballs, drop dynamite, and... well, have a look for yourself. **Incidentally, the figures in bold show the maximum possible damage from a direct hit.**

STANDARD WEAPONS

BAZOOKA

With an infinite supply of ammo, players will no doubt get used to using this weapon once you've wasted all your decent weapons! It has a large blast wave and as such is excellent for blowing worms off the screen. It's inadvisable to use this at close range, but clever use of the wind allows for backward shots over distance.

50pts damage.



Bono's being a bit ambitious here, firing a bazooka over everyone's heads...

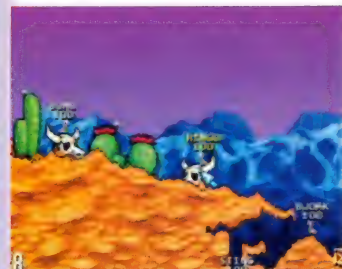


...and it works! Vera takes it right up the chaffinch, and she's away.

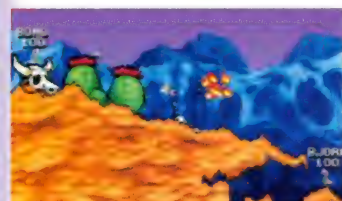
HOMING MISSILE

Nothing more than a homing bazooka, this is in limited supply but bloody useful. It's affected by wind and gravity, and also takes a while to acquire its target, so practice is required. The best tactic is to fire it straight up at full strength, and then hope it finds its way back to the target below.

50pts damage.



Here's Bjork. She's selected Homing Missile, used the arrow to select the target...



...shot the missile into the air, and enjoyed the fireworks. There goes Ringo!

GRENADE

Like the bazooka, these have an unlimited supply and must be mastered to survive long matches. They can be customised to explode after 1-5 seconds with a low, medium, or high bounce. When you play against the CPU their accuracy is legendary (not to mention completely unreasonable). Bastards.

50pts damage.



I can't remember who it is, but that worm halfway up the hill has just lobbed a grenade at Suggs...



And he's off! Never mind the damage, the ex-Madness singer is about to leave the screen.

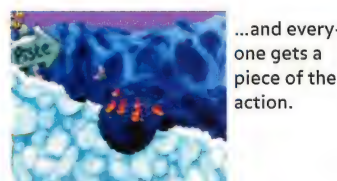
CLUSTER BOMB

This is very similar to the standard grenade, only with a limited supply. The best thing, though, is that the bomb splits into five smaller warheads on explosion, spreading out over a small area. A good technique with these is to use them as miniature Airstrikes (see elsewhere) by deliberately launching them high over multiple targets and setting the fuse to explode before landing.

25pts damage.



Buster, Keith, and Suggs are asking for trouble standing there. A well timed cluster explodes overhead...



...and everyone gets a piece of the action.

SHOTGUN

The shotgun is unique in that you get two shots. Being able to move and change aim in between shots (time permitting) means that – when shooting over distance – the first shot can be used to judge your aim, with the second shot adjusting to get a direct hit. It also makes a very nice noise.

25pts damage.



What a beautiful position to be in. Vera to my left, Adrian to my right, and tons of mines for them to fall on.



Vera gets one in the back, falls onto the mines, and flies skyward. Hi, Adrian. I've still got one shot left. HA HA HA HA HA!

UZI

This weapon is generally only used for satisfying revenge tactics, as it scatters a rapid spread of bullets at your opponent. The damage inflicted varies, as the target often gets knocked out of the way after the first few hits. The Uzi is best used when you have an opponent pinned against a wall.

25pts damage.



Howard could have a bit of trouble here. I've got him trapped against an enormous ice cream cone, and...



"UZI 9mm!" Die you nasty, dreadlocked, lipping singer! Robbie can't help you now.

FIRE PUNCH

This close-range attack works as more of a kick than a punch, but is especially effective when trying to knock a worm off a ledge onto mines or into water. It also has a vertical "cutting" effect, so you can use it to jump up and hit worms that are positioned above you on the landscape, or ones that you've tunnelled under.

30pts damage.



Oh dear. Buster's standing right on the edge, looking the wrong way.



Here, allow me to chip in and help you fall to your death.

DRAGON BALL

This works in a similar way to the punch, only without the "cutting" action. It's generally used to knock worms off the screen or off ledges. Once hit, the damaged worm flies backwards and slightly up.

30pts damage.



Ah, Mr Ringo. I believe certain death awaits below.



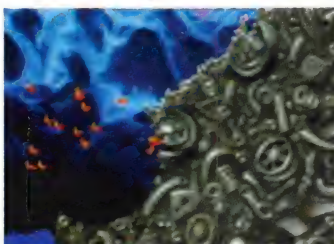
Allow me to knock you off with a Dragon Ball!

DYNAMITE

Easily the most satisfying weapon in the game. There's nothing like standing on a ledge and dropping a stick of TNT on Steve's head. Once released, you have five seconds to run away, and with the blast wave from dynamite being the biggest in the game, that's no small feat! The blast takes out huge chunks of land, as well as generally propelling any nearby worms skyward. You only get one, so if possible use it between a couple of enemy worms. It's a beauty! 75pts damage.



Well John's just asking for it isn't he?



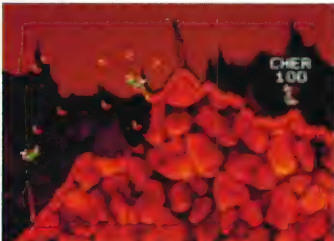
So up we sneak, drop the dynamite, and run away as fast as possible, and BISH! BOSH! BOOM! He's off for a quick drink.

LANDMINES

Similar in effect to dynamite, but being proximity mines, will only explode if near worms. These can be used as either cheap dynamite, or to protect tunnels. You can also shoot mines to knock it into other worms for a juicy chain reaction. 50pts damage.



He might not have any TNT left, but that worm above Ringo can still drop a mine on his enemy's head.



And once the proximity mine arms itself, it's boom-time.

AIRSTRIKE

This is very useful when you have a number of enemy worms together, as it calls in an eight bomb drop from the sky which causes variable damage depending upon the spread's accuracy.

This is particularly effective if the targeted area features landmines (more chain reactions my friends!)



Who could resist this? Famous Dogs, Take That, AND a bloke called Keith all standing together. Call in the planes!



KABOOM! Howard and Scooby survived, but the others will be limping for days.

TELEPORT

Teleport is a useful move which, is played correctly, can massively effect the course of the match. Generally used to move worms from precarious positions, it can also be used to collect weapon crates, or just to hide an injured worm in the safety of a cave.



Hmm. I'm stuck on a half-busted bridge and don't really want to stay, but I'm blocked by a mine. No worries!

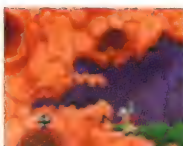


With a flip of my communicator, I'm teleported to the location of my choice.

BLOWTORCH

This is more a tool than a weapon, as it allows the player to cut through landscapes. You can cut either across or up and down diagonally, for either the set period of time or by stopping with a button press. You can also blowtorch opponents (one for the twisted minds) but it's better used by injured worms who want to attack without exposing themselves. 15pts damage.

I'm trapped! I've got no teleports



left, and certainly won't be able to swing out...



...so it's out with the blowtorch, and time to go diggin'.

PNEUMATIC DRILL

This tool allows you to dig down, either to avoid attack, or to prepare for a strategic dig. Though this does get you well out of the way, it leaves you open to any git who drops a well-aimed grenade or stick of TNT on your head. The drill can also inflict damage in close combat for those extra humiliating finishing moves! 15pts damage.



A bit of a gittish situation here. Pretty much surrounded, there's only one way out.



Down, doobie-do down down. Cumma cumma...

BUNGEE

Because falling too far ends your worm's turn, the bungee rope is invaluable for moving between ledges. It's also handy because, time permitting, you can still complete your move (with weapons) once you've finished with the bungee. Basically, once the bungee is activated, walk off the edge of a ledge and you'll bounce down. You can also swing on the end to throw yourself off in other directions.



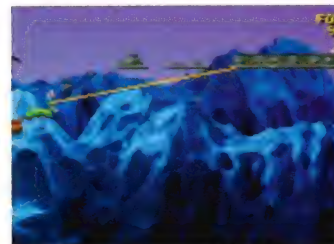
I really want to get down and have a go at George, but it's too far to fall.

No problem thanks to my faithful Bungee. Just need to watch out for that mine!



NINJA ROPE

Similar to the bungee, only better, the ninja rope allows you to aim and fire onto any ledges and obstacles. This can then be used to pull yourself over distances, avoiding mines, or to swing – as with the bungee. You can also use the limited length of the rope to collect weapon crates. While on the rope, time is frozen, allowing you as long as you want to arse about. You can also lengthen and shorten your rope, allowing a cheap and effective transport across uneven terrain. Phwoar! Just like Spider-Man. (Er...™. Probably).



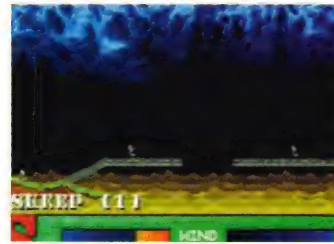
There's no way I'm going to be able to get across this bridge (what with half of it missing) so...



...out with the ninja rope, fire it at the centre for maximum swing, and it's Tarzan time!

GIRDERS

Girders are generally used to bridge gaps or to provide supports for ninja ropes, but nasty, evil people often use them to block enemy worms in, or as deflector shields once everyone's down to bazookas and grenades. more handy than you might think.



Vader wants to kick Pertwee but, as you can see from the zoomed-out view, there's a massive bit of the bridge missing.



No problem with new Girder™. It also comes in a variety of shapes and sizes.

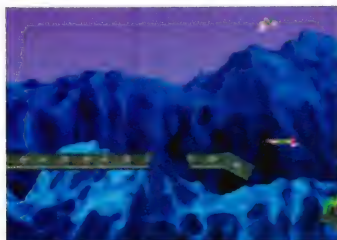
KAMIKAZE

Kamikaze really is a desperation attack, but is often worth the sacrifice. The worm in question dies once it explodes (after about half a second

of flight) but inflicts damage on any worms it hits along the way as well as throwing them up into the air. This is always best when you have a flat landscape crowded with worms, and especially effective once sudden death is active as you can sacrifice one worm for six or seven enemies. **30pts damage.**



Things aren't looking good. This worm is down to a couple of health points, and the bridge is out.



To die with honour then. If I'm gonna' go, I'm taking Paul with me. **ARRRRGGG!**

PROD

The prod does no damage to the receiving worm, but it's a damn good laugh, especially when used to push a worm off a cliff, or down a slippery slope onto mines. As far as total humiliation goes, to lose a match to a prod is worse than pooing yourself on a crowded train.



Poor old Maid Marrion. Standing right on the edge of a slippery slope near freezing water. Nothing too flash needed here.



Just a good hard shove should get her glugging. Bye!

SPECIAL WEAPONS

As well as the default supply of standard weapons, weapon drops occur during the match, offering extra weapons to those greedy enough to risk going after them.

SHEEP

Sony must have strange ethic codes. They wouldn't let Team 17 use crucifixes in the game, but were quite happy to let them blow up sheep! Weird. Still, it's damn good fun to watch, and does tons of damage to boot. This fluffy four-legged variation on dynamite gallops off across the landscape, and explodes at the touch of a button. A particularly fun game is to set one off down an opponent's carefully crafted tunnel. Aha-ha! **50pts damage.**



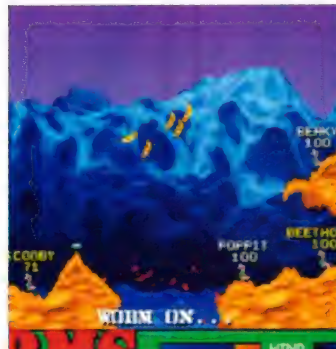
Bubbles has just collected a rather handy sheep. Off you go little fella.



Baa. Baa. BANG! Aha-ha.

BANANA BOMBS

Banana Bombs are the fruit of the gods. They act like Cluster Bombs in the way they disperse on impact, but each banana inflicts major damage. Get enough worms together, and this can take out entire teams in one go. **75pts damage.**



Scooby, Poppit, and Beethoven — all standing close together. Time for a banana or two methinks.



And they're off! Su-poib.

COMMENT

STEVE

I haven't enjoyed a game as much as *Worms* in ages. From the screen shots I had seen of the Amiga version, I thought it was just going to be a *Lemmings* clone with elements of Sensi's *Cannon Fodder* thrown in for good measure. Wrong. While *Worms* invites comparison to the said Amiga classics, its playability is in a league of its own. Skill, forethought and timing are essential as you blow the crap out of your opponent, and in two-player mode genuine rivalry is effected. Quite simply, although *Worms* is never going to win awards for its aesthetics, it'll scoop the board for the playability crown. Awesome.

GIFT FROM THE GODS

Every now and then during matches, the game will pause for a second and a weapon crate will fall from the sky. These crates hold extra teleports, airstrikes, cluster bombs, dynamite, and sometimes the extra special weapons detailed elsewhere. I've also included a picture illustrating the sort of luck that's befallen me on occasion (ie: a crate landing right next to me just in the nick of time). It's this sort of thing that drives Steve mad.



COMMENT

MATT

Now listen. *Worms* doesn't look all that sexy, but you just play the thing, especially with a mate or two, and then you'll believe me. At first the game appears to be 'just' an absolutely brilliant blamfest, but then you start experimenting with some of the less obvious tactics, and a very strategic game also starts to emerge. Being able to change every option helps, as you can force players who depend on homing missiles and air strikes (like that git Steve) to rely on more skillful attacks. The inclusion of tools such as ninja ropes and digging equipment adds another side to play, so rather than just seeing who can get the most hits in first, waiting games and 'coward play' are possible. If there's a bad word to be said against *Worms*, it's that the one-player game is extremely unfair simply because there's no way any opponent should be able to throw a pin-point accurate grenade the length of the screen, and still time it to explode right on my head. Still, you can alter the difficulty, and it does make any wins that much more rewarding. Ultimately, playing against CPU should be treated as nothing more than practice for when you want to play humans, and other than that, *Worms* can't be faulted. There are very few games that we still play months after reviewing, but I think you'll hear *Worms* screaming in this office for a very long time. We no longer have lunch time. Steve just looks over his monitor and says "Matt. It's ten to *Worms*." If ever there was a game to recommend unreservedly, it's this. Excellent stuff.

RATING

82

83

81

70

92

92

OVERALL

92

GRAPHICS

ANIMATION

SOUND FX

MUSIC

LASTABILITY

PLAYABILITY



GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY:EASY
CONTINUES:NONE
SKILL LEVELS:2

RELEASE NOVEMBER

PRICE £39.99

BY MINDSCAPE

PLAYERS 1-2

CYBER



People should have expected it really. In the age of biological, bobble removing, super whitening washing powders, clothes hung innocently up to dry were bound to start mutating sooner or later. It wasn't long before pants, socks and slacks were taking on a life of their own and relieving the boredom of their newly found consciousness by racing up and down the clothes line. One step further along the evolutionary roller coaster and the sport of Cyber Speed was created. While you're questioning the truth of this story, I'll tell you about the basics. *Cyber Speed*, at its simplest, is a racing game. The difference is that vehicles don't race along a track or hover above it, but hang from a wire. This wire leads them around futuristic tracks where there are obstacles to dodge, power-ups to collect and other vehicles to shoot at. There are ten tracks to compete on in all, and eight competitors to choose from, each with their own customised vehicle.

Championships involve finishing in the top three in order to move on to the next course, collecting points for your position. Alternatively, there's the one off race to familiarise yourself with the courses and your opponents.

To increase the thrill of racing, *Cyber Speed* comes with a multi-media coating, what with commentary from a Texan version of Murray Walker and even adverts that appear between races! Fortunately there's no sign of Danny Baker telling you how to get your racing machine whiter than



WIRED UP

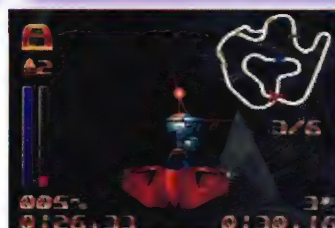
Weird looking though they are, you'd be foolish to think that the vehicles in *Cyber Speed* are nothing more than space age jalopies. Here's the MOT:

BOOST



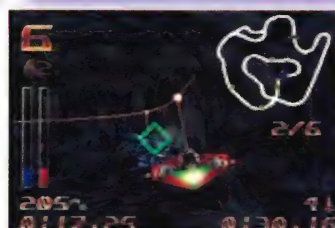
The blue bar on the left is the boost bar. When a player has powered up enough they can use one of their three boosts to improve speed. The more powered up the blue bar, the bigger the boost. Look out for pick-ups as well.

MINE



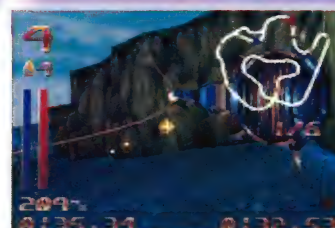
The competitors in *Cyber Speed* are very well matched and as a result you're almost always likely to have someone harassing your rear end (providing you're not last). Solve the problem by dropping a mine to slow them down.

GUIDED MISSILE



Once you're locked on to a vehicle ahead of you, release one of your guided missiles and prepare to dodge past them as they grind to a halt. That said, it is possible to out manoeuvre missiles.

STANDARD FIRE



While it lacks the power of a guided missile, standard fire comes in a vast supply. If you use it while attempting to overtake, it usually causes opponents to clear out of the way.



SPEED

COMMENT

STEVE

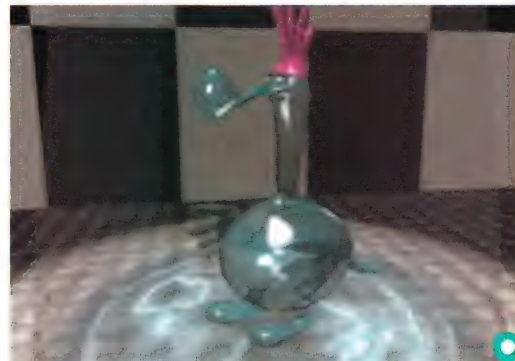
Any new race games are always going to be compared to *WipeOut*. And it's only fair, with the SIE game fulfilling every race game wish: speed, excellent screen update, and playability. Of these factors, *Cyber Speed* has the update and excellent control system, but it never seems to kick into high gear. The wire-based tracks are nothing short of superb, and although leaning into a corner seems odd at first, it soon becomes second nature and shears valuable seconds off lap-times. However, with so many vehicles in relatively short circuits, novice players may find themselves bumping into someone every couple of seconds. Patience brings its own rewards, though, and while *Cyber Speed* isn't a classic, it is a racer worthy of recognition, but always destined to be in the shadow of *WipeOut*.

CYBER SELL

Right from the start, *Cyber Speed* has a televisual presentation. The introduction is like the opening to a cyber sports program, and once you're racing there's a running commentary from a more than excited American geezer. But what really pushes the idea home are the adverts that pop up between races. In fully rendered 3D, these comical interludes offer you the products of the future, be they 'Space Flakes' cereal with added sugar and caffeine, pizza delivery and window repairs by Pierre, or a genetic kit for kids who want to practice making crossbreed animals.



EVEN IN THE FUTURE THERE'LL BE NO ESCAPE FROM ESTATE AGENTS.



IF YOU BUY YOURSELF A GENETIKIT (LEFT) YOU CAN MAKE GREAT ANIMALS AND STICK RUBBER GLOVES ON THEIR HEADS!

CYBERSPEED

TOW THE LINE

There are ten tracks to race on in *Cyber Speed*. Be warned though, you'll only get to see them all if you succeed in finishing consistently in the top three. If you don't, it's back to the beginning. Here's a look at the first four

TRACK ONE



The easiest track of them all, it is simply a figure of eight with long straights on which to exploit boosters and overtake other racers.

The crossover point is undercover so here it's best to keep the ship low to avoid crashing into the roof.

TRACK TWO



Lots of bends here as you weave through canyons so it's important you get the right tension on the wire. Apart from that it's all straight forward and you should have no problem finishing in the top three.

TRACK THREE



Track three involves lots of straights but this is coupled with chambers full of dips, curves and falls. It also introduces the option of choosing which direction to go in — one way is less hazardous but the other tends to have power ups.

TRACK FOUR



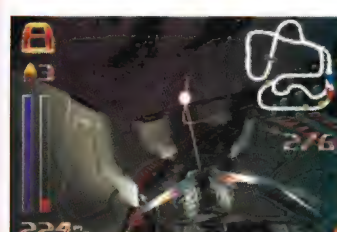
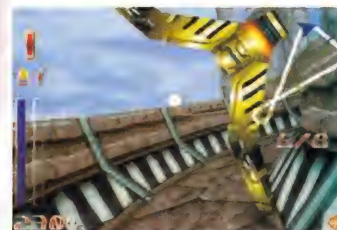
With the look of an Eighties nightclub about it, track four involves climbs and drops, much like a roller coaster. There are also jutting obstacles that you need to spot quickly to avoid.

BONUS BALL

After three races there's a bonus track where it's you and a 'Super Ship' in a one-on-one battle. Tracks tend to be simplistic allowing you to concentrate on speed alone. Once you've won one of these races you might be a bit baffled about getting nothing in return. The fact is that you have to win *all* of the bonuses in the game to get a special mystery prize. Seems a bit pointless really, because by this stage you've finished the game.



ONE OF MANY
TUNNELS TO
ENJOY.



COME FLY WITH ME

Apparently, part of the inspiration for *Cyber Speed* comes from the Alton Towers ride, *Nemesis*, which the programmers happened to try out on a sort of busmans holiday. Is the game as exciting? Decide for yourself as *PlayStation Plus* takes you on a ride around track five...



COMMENT

ROB

The comparisons that *Cyber Speed* has drawn with *Wipeout* prior to its release are nothing if not good publicity. As to the justification for such comparisons, well, that's where the marketing babble dries up and the reality steps in, and the reality is that *Wipeout* leaves *Cyber Speed* coughing in its exhaust fumes. What I still can't figure out is why the racing takes place on a sort of wire rail. An interesting concept it may be but as far as gameplay goes it just doesn't really work. The tracks are fast, nicely drawn and succeed in building a bit of atmosphere, but this all seems to fall flat thanks to the uninspiring way in which you race from track to track. I felt like I didn't have enough control over my vehicle and the problem lies in the rather obvious fact that when it's attached to a wire leading it around a course, there's not a great deal you have to do. In fairness, you can try and improve on your shooting skills, obstacle dodging ability or effectiveness on corners, but for a racing game surely the most important thing is how you race and *Cyber Speed* puts that particular skill on a bit of a back burner.

ROPEY DRIVING

So what is this stringy thing that the race ships hang from? According to those in the know it's a force beam. How much power it provides or denies your ship depends on how well you utilise it. As a ship turns a corner it will swing out and stress the beam. The red power bar will let you know that this is draining energy. To prevent it take an inside line, thus compressing the force beam and increasing your ship's power. Sounds implausible, but hey, it works!



RATING

79

71

80

79

88

83

OVERALL

GRAPHICS

ANIMATION

SOUND FX

MUSIC

LASTABILITY

PLAYABILITY

88



REVIEW

ESPN EXTREME

GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
CONTINUES: N/A
SKILL LEVELS: 4

RELEASE NOVEMBER

PRICE TBA

BY SONY

PLAYERS 1-2



When I was younger, so much younger than today, I really wanted a skateboard. Of course, I'm talking about the first time skateboards were trendy – and that was before even the big BMX revolution – so I hassled my dad endlessly to get me one. After about two years of continuous whining, we finally managed to pry open his wallet, and out sprung a lovely new board. We then made the rather startling discovery that I couldn't ride it to save my life. It was, as they say, a bit of a disappointment.

Anyway, the skateboard went on to be one of the more famous landmarks in my bedroom (in the world-renowned 'Under the Bed Museum' of Essex), but the urge to travel at high speed through streets, with only flesh and hair protecting my fragile knee caps, never left me. And so it is that I carry a broad grin on my face, because here's the perfect opportunity to air those childhood fantasies – and this time I won't have to wear one of those silly helmets that made my hair look like a wax dome.

ESPN offers the player a choice of four modes of transport: the aforementioned skateboard option; rollerblades; a mountain bike; and a rather weird 'tea-tray on wheels' affair called a street luge. Each stage has a very basic logic; come first, either beat your opponent with speed or by just beating them (literally) and try to pass through as many gates as possible. You're awarded points depending on how many gates you complete and your final position, while money is collected en route to buy better equipment with.



RUMBLE!

Racing is racing, but racing with fighting... ah, that's another matter. Similar to the game play of *Road Rash*, as well as being able to out-race your opponents you can employ the Dark Side of the Force and simply beat the buggers up as they try to pass you. Kids an' violence – they love it!



GAMES

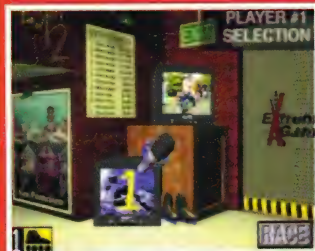
SIDE SPLITTING

Where *ESPN* really comes into its own is in two-player mode. It's not something I can really show with static pictures alone, but being (as I am) bound by the forces of nature, you'll just have to make do with this sequence. Enjoy.



REVIEW

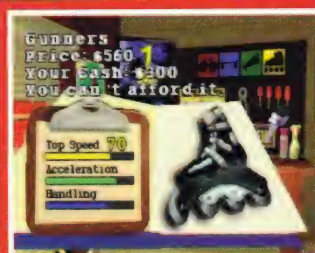
WELL EQUIPPED



Hello and welcome to the main screen. From here you can select your course, view the season rankings, select your characters, and even go into the equipping room where...



...you can equip yourself (no!). You can select from the four vehicles on offer and, if you have enough money, even have a browse through the catalogue for something a bit better.



Such as these lovely new blades. If only they weren't named after such an Arse team (and if only I had enough money).

GATES MCFADDEN

As well as avoiding the millions of obstacles and vicious CPU competitors, you also have to try to pass through as many of the gates on the course as possible. These come in three flavours, each with a different effect.

GREEN GATES

Extremely important, the green gates offer hard cash (accompanied by a nice "ker-ching!") You'll win more money if you finish in a decent position, but if you're still learning the ropes, this is a slow but sure way of building up your vital funds.



YELLOW GATES

These aren't so important for the casual player, but if you want to grab yourself some decent season points you could do a lot worse than jump through these little darlings.



BLUE GATES

Extremely dangerous in the wrong hands, these gates are more switches than anything else. Jump through these and stone pillars will move out of your way, secret short cuts will open, and, if you can time it right, dustcarts will trundle across the road to topple your opponents.



WHERE IN THE WORLD?

Your hilarious, nay extreme, japes take you all over the world. Here for your entertainment and delight are the locations, along with some of their major features.

COMMENT

MATT

Okay, let's just get one things straight — *ESPN* isn't trying to beat *WipeOut* or *Ridge Racer*. It is, however, bloody good fun. From the moment we loaded this up we liked it, and to be honest, our affections have only grown since. The main thing is that you can just pick it up and get going immediately. The graphics look great, the scrolling is superb (even in the excellent split-screen mode) and as far as fun goes, well, you just try watching Steve tonk his head against a lamp post at 60mph without laughing. There are no fancy competitions to compete in, and no real point to the game, but to be honest it doesn't matter. It's just about having fun and beating up the other competitors. I sat with four mates last night, and though we whistled through about six fancy new games I had to show them, once *ESPN* was on, well, let's just say that I've only had about four hours sleep! As a one-player game, there's the challenge of trying to squeeze through the gates, get past the competition, and improve your performance, while the two-player game offers exactly the same amount of 'play' but with the added bonus of punching your friends to the floor. Sit *ESPN* next to the likes of *Destruction Derby* and *Ridge Racer* and I know it seems like a strange thing to say, but I'd rather play this any day. Another perhaps worrying thought (well, certainly for EA anyway) is what the hell are we going to do with *Road Rash* when it comes along? I certainly have no need for it now. Anyone for a quick two-player?

TRAIN!!

Extreme Games is full of nice surprises, and just when you think you've got a nice long stretch to build up some speed, out of nowhere steams a bloody huge train. JUMP!!



UTAH

Utah is the first course to feature in the season. To be frank, it's a bit of a nasty one to start off with simply because it has extremely twisty bends at the start of the course.



There you are, scooting along quite happily, when what should appear around the corner but a bloody huge fence across the road. Typical!



If ever there was an obstacle to test your timing and control, it's these gits. Sort of automated-pole-vault-bar thingies, these slowly move up and down in front of you. Jump or duck? I dunno!

SAN FRANCISCO

This is a nice long course, with tons to see, and tons to fall over.



Roll out the barrel, we'll (quite literally) have a barrel of fun. These are very nasty indeed. Some are static, some are rolling, but all are deadly — and there are also tons of tyres all over the place just in case things were too easy for you.



Being a jolly busy city, San Francisco has a large system of trams running throughout the city centre. Unless your reflexes are sharp enough to get you out of the way, you'll have to use the ramp supplied to jump. Ah, but have you really got enough speed?

ITALY

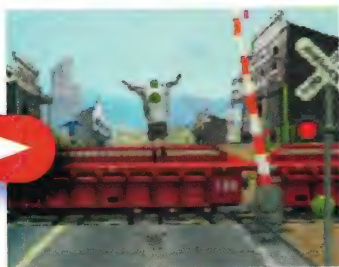
A personal favourite, Italy combines some excellent open track design with a nice-but-difficult cobbled street affair towards the end. The course also features tons of lovely green dosh gates to be plundered.



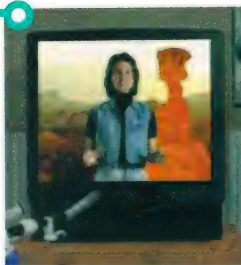
Now I'm not one to complain, but will someone please get this sodding great tractor out of my way! Bloody farmers.



If you thought it was hard to manoeuvre during the main section, just wait until you have to negotiate the narrow cobbled streets. It's a tad tight, to say the least.



IF YOU CHOOSE TO HAVE THE VIDEO OPTION ON, ESPN'S VERY OWN SUZY KOLBER APPEARS BEFORE AND AFTER EACH RACE, TELLING YOU ABOUT THE LOCATION YOU'RE ABOUT TO RACE, AND LETTING YOU KNOW WHAT SHE THOUGHT OF YOUR PERFORMANCE. SHE'S A SARCASTIC COW WHO DOES NOTHING BUT ANNOY. MY ADVICE: TURN HER OFF!



SOUTH AMERICA

This is easily the hardest course to tackle, with lots of very tight tracks and billions of objects being thrown into your path.



If you've had any trouble during the race, just hold on until you get to one of the rope bridges that connect sections of this course. Tuck in your wings and get ready to accelerate up to 65mph! See how long you can keep this speed up once you get into the jungle.



Although South America is a tough cookie, it does have one feature that the others don't — an underground cave. This is brilliant, not only because the graphic effect is superb, but because there are tons of enormous moving pillars and secret doors to be played with. Excellent.

LAKE TAHOE

Although Lake Tahoe is quite a simple course, there are, however, tyres and hay bales to be avoided or jumped.



Just when you're starting to feel all cocky and clever with your new found jumping abilities, ESPN goes and makes you look all silly by sticking a bloody enormous pile of hay in front of you. Advice? Just get out of the way, okay.



If ever there was a location likely to result in a punch-up, it's here. The tunnels are so tight and twisty, the chances of you getting through without a confrontation are pretty damn slim indeed. (Feel free to add your own 'slimmer than...' gag).

COMMENT

STEVE

ESPN blatantly nicks ideas from

EA's 16bit hits *Skitchin* and *Road Rash*. However, far from being a poor imitation, ESPN upstages those hoary old Megadrive titles with stylish graphics and pace 16-bit owners would die for. The idea of a race game wherein you are invited to kick the crap out of your opponents is nothing new and has been done countless times in the past, but ESPN combines such enjoyable violence with a race game which stands up alongside *Ridge Racer* as one of the most immediately playable to date. Genuine skill is needed to maximise the bonuses offered by the assorted gates and likewise pixel-perfect timing is required if you are to knock a mate into a haybale just as he's about to overtake. It is the perfect combination of these factors that make ESPN one of my favourite PlayStation games. The immaculate pairing of speed skills and fighting moves is then added upon by the superb graphics. The PlayStation effortlessly produced cityscapes and roads which add detail to an already stunning game.



AS IF THE COURSES WEREN'T LONG ENOUGH, KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN AND YOU'LL NOTICE SECRET

ENTRANCES HIDDEN AWAY ON THE EDGES OF TRACKS. IF YOU'RE QUICK ENOUGH YOU CAN ZIP OFF DOWN THESE WHICH, APART FROM OFFERING SHORT CUTS, GENERALLY CONTAIN EXTRA-HANDY GATES.

PICK A DUDE, ANY DUDE

When you participate in a full season you need to pick your character carefully as you won't be able to change once things get underway. In all honesty, it's best to first choose what mode of transport you prefer and then find the character to match. The attributes are, from top to bottom: cycling skill, skateboard skill, street luge skill, in-line skating skill, strength, and character's health.



RATING

84

78

73

75

89

91

OVERALL

90

GRAPHICS

ANIMATION

SOUND FX

MUSIC

LASTABILITY

PLAYABILITY

STRIKER

GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: AVE
CONTINUES: N/A
SKILL LEVELS: TEAM DEPENDENT

RELEASE NOVEMBER

PRICE £39.99

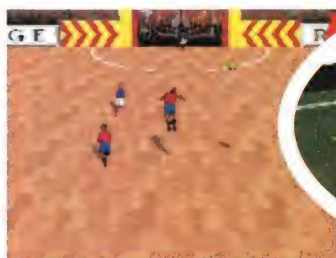
BY WARNER INTER

PLAYERS 1-4



very video game system has a classic football game released for it at some point. The hoary old ZX Spectrum had John Ritman's *Match Day*, the C64 had the *International Soccer* cartridge, and, more recently, the Super NES has trumped the lot with Konami's incredible *International Superstar Soccer*. Now, first on to the pitch in the Sony league is Warner's conversion of *Striker* – a game gracing more machines than a Page 3 pin-up in an industrial workplace.

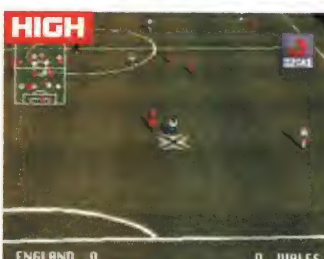
This 32-bit incarnation of the hardy perennial, though, adds much more to the original idea, swapping the old 'high and behind goal' view of the Amiga and console versions for a sweeping and panning system which zooms in on the action. All the customary international squads are present, an indoor game has been thrown in for good measure, and a cluster of fancy kicks are also there for the taking. Similarly, *Striker '96* also obeys most FIFA rules, with an ever-present referee (and a pair of linesmen, no less) overseeing each game and dishing out red and yellow cards for offside, fouls and other such misdeemeanours. And in an attempt to add realism to the game, when the players have run on to the pitch, they then proceed to warm up by running around a bit and testing the 'keeper. Cool.



WHATEVER THE WEATHER

Striker's default mode pits the two team against each other on a normal pitch surface with the camera angles changing to home in on key points. If this isn't to your liking, though, the matches can also be viewed from the side, from way above, or right in on the action (although this proves rather tricky for measuring passes) – but it has to be said that some views are all much of a muchness. Similarly, in addition to the normal pitch, wet, arid and icy surfaces are on offer, all of which make subtle changes to the speed of each match, or there's an indoor arena contained by four walls.

CAMERA VIEWS



96



COMMENT

MATT

Hmm. Sorry Warner Interactive, but I'm not too sure about this one. The presentation is very nice, and there are quite a few features within the game that I'm taken with (the power bar, for example) but the overall gameplay lets it down. The players move nicely, and you'll never have too much trouble getting the ball to go where you want, but its behaviour is just a bit too 'ping-pong-like' for me. And while the repetitive commentary is on, you'll avoid tackling just to bypass its weak comments. The camera views don't really offer as much variety as you'd expect, and often the panning seems to rush back and forth desperately trying to keep up with the action. Also (doh!) *Striker* sadly fails the 'can you tonk it up-pitch and score diagonally' test. Oh dear.

LOVELY MOVER

Striker '96's assorted international teams range from giants such as Brazil, Germany and the Italians down to... um... 'less successful' elevens including Mexico, Saudi Arabia and South Korea.

The joystick's four buttons allow for passes, lobs and shooting, with a red energy bar at the top of the screen determining the strength of the kick by the time the button is depressed. The game's many shots and tricks are all effected using these four buttons, with the move pulled off depending on the height, speed and proximity of the ball — a heel flick over the head, for example, means the ball must be flicked from behind, while volleys are hit shortly before the ball bounces. Aftertouch may also be added to shots via the L and R buttons.



COMMENT

STEVE

In previous incarnations, *Striker* has always been regarded as a bit of an Endsleigh League effort. This reputation is set to continue with this adequate PlayStation conversion which, while immediately playable and containing most footy game requisites, never really gels as a decent simulation or kick-about. In terms of speed, everything's fine and the players nip about at a fair old whack. However, as *Striker* is very much an arcade simulation, it could do with a bit more realism in places. Gameplay all too often relies on whacking it upfield for someone to score from diagonal shot, and tackling is unwieldy and nearly always ends in a booking. Although the 'power bar' system for passing and shooting works well, and pulling off bicycle kicks or diving headers easily achieved, it is rather redundant as it is simpler just to follow the aforementioned 'whack and shoot' system. As a two-player game, *Striker '96* fares slightly better, but its lack of lasting appeal due to its simplistic gameplay means it'll probably end up somewhere in the middle of the Sony footy league. And I guarantee you'll turn the commentary off after ten minutes, too.



THAT'S ANDY

As the two sides go at each other, commentary comes via the sampled burr of Sky Broadcasting's Andy Gray. Without his trusty light pen to pick out fouls and shot angles, Gray is reduced to a mere spectator who responds to on-field antics with gruff bleatings like 'och, he'll feel that', and 'what a fine play.' However, as most games are spent tonking the ball upfield, only to bundle over an opposing defender for possession, the sample you'll hear the most will be Gray's *Striker '96* classic: 'och, that's not the best tackle I've ever seen.' Yeah? Izzat so, Andy? Well, it got the sod off the ball and was better than most of your real-life efforts.



RATING

73

65

69

70

60

74

OVERALL

GRAPHICS

ANIMATION

SOUND FX

MUSIC

PLAYABILITY

69

GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY:EASY
CONTINUUES:FIVE
SKILL LEVELS:3

RELEASE NOVEMBER

PRICE £39.99

BY SONY

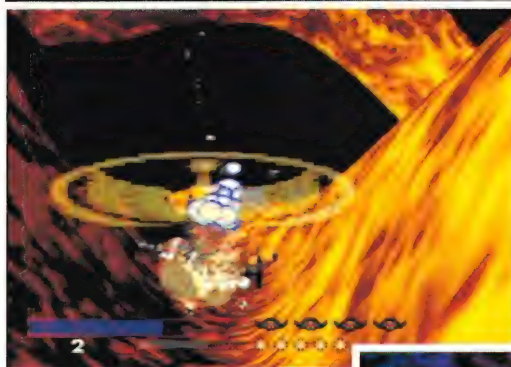
PLAYERS 1



Imagine all the characters from *Star Wars* in a band...Yoda would no doubt be the blues

man, taping his stumpy feet while he jams on the harmonica. Han Solo would smoke endless cigarettes and funk it up on the bass guitar, while Luke, utilising his Richard Clayderman appeal, could go for the piano. Chewbacca would unquestionably be the Bez character, trancing out with a pair of maracas in his primitive palms, and as for Darth Vader, well, he'd be the techno mastermind mixing it up on the decks! I can see it now - 'Da Force' playing to a packed Wembley stadium...

What this has to do with *Novastorm* I don't know, only that we're once again dealing with a band of aliens who want to make music with Earthlings intestines. A by-the-numbers shoot 'em up, *Novastorm* sees the hero in a head on battle to destroy them before they destroy us, collecting power-ups, tackling bosses and generally whizzing about the galaxy.



BOSS STORM

There are no shortage of bosses in *Novastorm*. They might take the shape of a cyber shark, a huge cave serpent, or something more stationary like a radar unit or gun tower. The important thing is to find their weak spot and concentrate your fire power there. Providing you do, they're dead before you can say 'Nic'.



STORM

SMASHING ORANGEY BIT!

After bashing away at the irritating enemy hordes for a few minutes, you're going to come across a boss. Here's a step by step guide to handling the first of them:



1

As the enemy floats towards you, hold your fire and wait until its shields open up to reveal its orangey core. This is its weak spot and here is where you'll have to concentrate your fire.



2

With typical alien cunning, this rotating beast will use a swarm gun and electric rays to destroy you. Take evasive action and then continue your bombardment.



COMMENT

MATT

My, what an attractive film. A game you say? Oh I see. Well that changes everything. What a waste of time! When are companies going to stop producing tosh where the only reason to endure the arse gameplay is to see the gorgeous rendered cut-scenes. On my first go, I waloped it on Easy, murdered everything with my ridiculous weapons, and then saw all there was to see. Value for money? I think not.

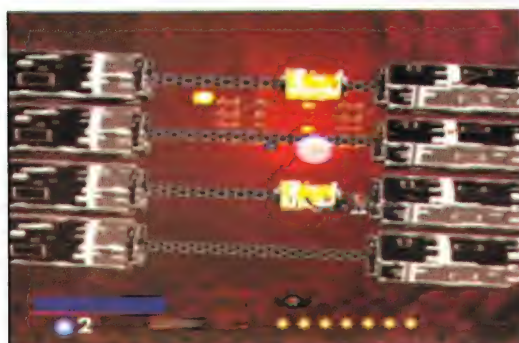
3

The next trick in your opponents repertoire involves sling-ing out a spiky bomb in your direction. Make use of smart bombs while dodging it. Providing they're on target, the effects are devastating.



4

If all goes well, you'll have the rotund antagonist by its ball in no time. Just sit back and enjoy the smashing orangey explosion!



RATING

90

65

75

62

52

60

OVERALL

GRAPHICS

ANIMATION

SOUND FX

MUSIC

LASTABILITY

PLAYABILITY

55

PSP

REVIEW

GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY:MEDIUM
CONTINUES:INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS:8

RELEASE OUT NOW

PRICE £39.99

BY ACCLAIM

PLAYERS 1-2



That's the thing with these superstar hard nuts, they're stubby gits.

Stallone is about 5'7, Segal is 5'8 and Gibson actually refuses to reveal how tall he is. Still, what they lack in height they more than make up for in width and martial arts skills.

The dynamite dwarf in *Street Fighter The Movie* is Jean-Claude Van Damme, the man with a penchant for doing the splits whenever he finds a half decent excuse. The film rides on the back of *Street Fighter II*'s world-wide success at the arcades and on consoles. Now, in true 'flog it until you drop' style, a game has been made out of the film.

Like *Street Fighter II*, *Street Fighter* is still a one-on-one beat 'em up, the main difference being that the characters now resemble their real-life counterparts. On top of this, the game also features the 'movie battle' option, with a player assuming the role of Guile and going from fight to fight, following the plot of the film.

All of the special moves remain and super combos and finishing combos are included as well. A new character appears in the shape of Sawada, replacing Fei Long who doesn't appear in the film. The rest is a matter of sonic booms, hadokens and flip kicks. No splits unfortunately.



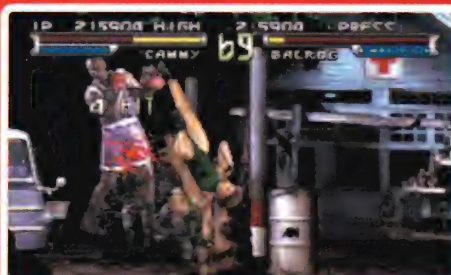
COMMENT

MATT

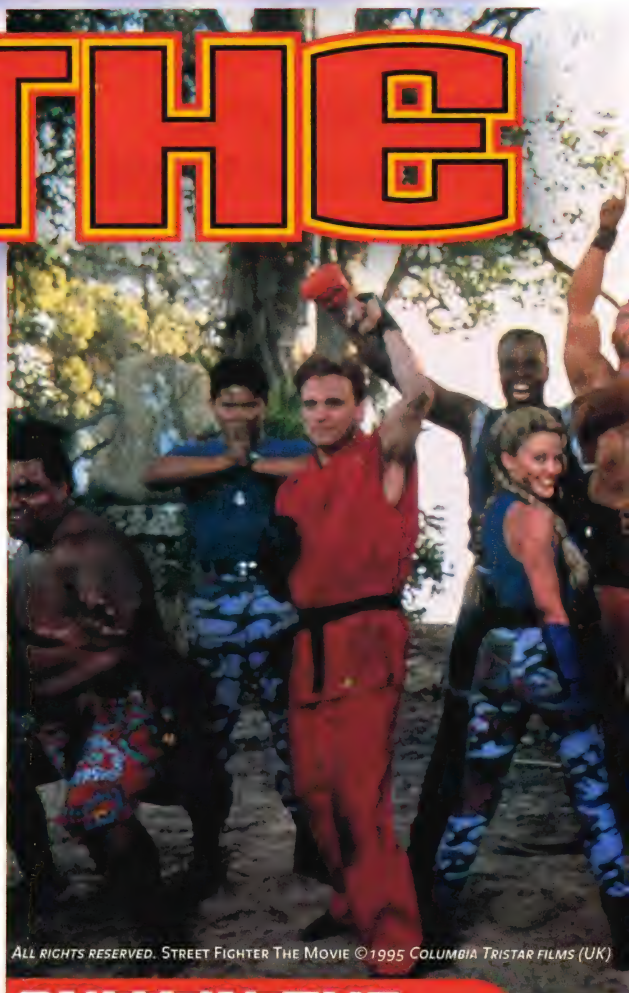
Though I've got my favourite, *Tekken*, to play with, I'll not be truly satisfied 'till I've got a proper *Street Fighter* variant to play with on the PlayStation. Being a major MAJOR fan of *SFII* (in it's various guises) my first reaction to this product was one of disgust! It's slow, the characters are pretty poor (just look at the state of Blanka!) and if it wasn't for all the late nights last issue, I probably wouldn't have bothered at all. However, there's slight fun to be had – but anybody unfamiliar with the classics will find little enjoyment here.

JUMBO COMBO

What made *Street Fighter II* such a classic was the range of special moves each character could pull off. This version of the game features all the moves, including the super combos which, when used for a finishing move, cause the screen to explode in celebratory



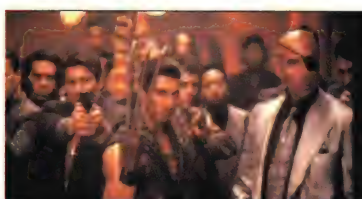
STREET THE



ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. STREET FIGHTER THE MOVIE ©1995 COLUMBIA TRISTAR FILMS (UK)

ONLY IN THE MOVIES

In the movie battle option, players play as Guile and Guile only. Using FMV fill-in sequences, it follows the storyline of the film, the heroic fighter moving from one bout to the next. Cammy is there to offer a choice of destinations, and the rest is a matter of annihilating everyone before the clock runs out and the hostages are doomed.



FIGHTER MOVIE



SAWADA YA GOT?

Those who've seen the movie will no doubt be wondering whether Captain Sawada, Guile's 'left-hand man', puts in an appearance in the game as well. As it happens, he does and with it comes a new range of special moves to enjoy:



KAMIKAZE BANZAI: THIS IS THE SUPER COMBO MOVE THAT SEES SAWADA DO A STANDING SLIDE INTO HIS OPPONENT WITH DEVASTATING EFFECT.



SAWADA SPECIAL '95: THIS IS A NUMBER OF COMBINATION FLIP KICKS THAT REPEATEDLY PUMMEL THE UNFORTUNATE WHO ENDS UP ON THE RECEIVING END.



GOKUSATSU-JIBAKUJIN: WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH, SAWADA IS FREE TO SLICE HIS GUTS UP IN A HARAKIRI MOVE THAT SPURTS DEADLY BLOOD ONTO THE ENEMY.

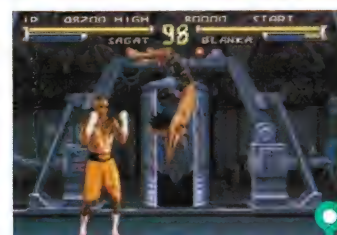


HYAKURETU-IZUNGIRI: SAWADA DOES LIGHTNING FAST HAND CHOPS ON HIS OPPONENT.

COMMENT

ROB

There were no real surprises when some bright spark decided to make a movie using the *Street Fighter* characters. The desire to cash in on a successful idea is never far from the marketing mind after all. However, the film didn't pull in the bucks so releasing a game on the back of it is a bit of a hopeful enterprise. There's nothing in *Street Fighter* that wasn't done better in one of its previous permutations. The gameplay is a lot slower than what appeared on the 16-bit machines and graphically *Street Fighter* is no improvement on its predecessors. A new option like the 'movie battle' only allows you to play as Guile so if you aren't that hot with the moves there's nothing you can do about it. Add to this the fact that the PlayStation sports the likes of *Tekken* and its impending sequel, and the mediocrity of this title makes itself even more apparent. Still, with no version of *Street Fighter II* on the horizon, some people will see this as the closest they'll get to the coin-op classic. For me, it just isn't close enough.



POOR BLANKA. AS IF BEING CRAP IN THE FILM WASN'T ENOUGH, HE'S A SKINNY GINGER HIPPIE IN THE GAME!

RATING	70	68	65	64	66	68	OVERALL
GRAPHICS							
ANIMATION							
SOUND FX							
MUSIC							
LASTABILITY							
PLAYABILITY							
							67

GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
CONTINUES: PASSWORD
SKILL LEVELS: 3

RELEASE	OUT NOW
PRICE	£44.99
BY	SCE
PLAYERS	1

3D

LEMMINGS

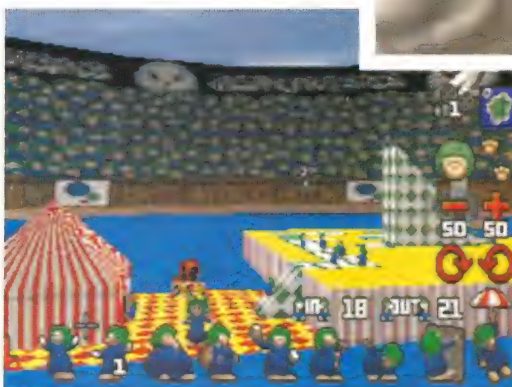


In this cruel world of ours there are thousands of reasons why someone might want to take their own life: unrequited love, the existential coldness of the universe, to find honour in defeat, because of all those little glossy magazines that fall out of bigger glossy magazines. You name it and you can bet there'll be people tightening ropes, slashing wrists and falling under trains because of it.

Apparently lemmings commit suicide simply to prevent overcrowding, the older ones jumping off cliffs to make way for the young. Personally, I think it's because they spend too much time listening to Joy Division. Whatever your opinion, SCE now offer you a chance to act as the Lemming God in an attempt to save them all from certain death.

This classic puzzle game has been around for a while now, but its arrival on the PlayStation is accompanied by a new 3D element. As the omnipotent presence, it's your solemn duty to guide the lemmings along platforms, over chasms, down cliffs and on to safety. This you'll do by electing certain lemmings for specific tasks like blocking, building, digging and so on.

Needless to say there are loads of puzzles, including some which get so complex that suicide seems like a cushy alternative to solving them. Even when you think you've got it sussed, increasing the speed of the lemmings will test just how fast on your feet you are. So what are you waiting for? Go forth good Samaritans!



LIGHTS! CAMERAS! DEATH!

With a name like *3D Lemmings* you get the idea that what's being promoted isn't simply that all-time classic puzzle game *Lemmings* but the fact that it now parades itself in 3D. What this means on a practical level is that the player can now rotate around the platforms, move left and right, draw back and zoom in, all in order to get a better idea of the logistics involved. This is also helped by the four different camera positions available.

LEMMING THEOLOGY

In *3D Lemmings* your role as the Lemming God is taken one step further with the programmers making your presence felt within, as well as extraneous to, the lemmings. Apart from the spiritual comfort this provides to the furry rodents, it enables you to view the action as a virtual lemming. This is essential in trying to solve puzzles where the usual camera view is stuck within the confines of a room, while the fluffy fools are disappearing out of the door. Here's the revelation in pictures:



LEMMINGS

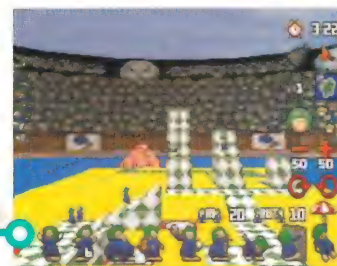


COMMENT

ROB

When
Lemmings
reared its

fluffy green bounce on the Super NES, I was one of its willing casualties. You could have set fire to my legs and I'd have been none the wiser, lost as I was in puzzle after puzzle. After three years though, I can't seem to find the same enthusiasm for it. The 3D revamp goes some way to rekindling my interest, but impressive as the new cosmetics are, that's all they are. In fact, rotating around and zooming in on the action tends to get in the way of the gameplay, making the whole thing a bit more fiddly. True, this is something you get used to, but what made the game so appealing in the first place was the balance struck between a simple control method and complex puzzles. This said, newcomers to *Lemmings* won't fail to enjoy it, because whatever's been done to the way it looks, the puzzles are as taxing as ever and it's still really rewarding when a solution clicks and the little buggers waddle to safety. Not for action fiends, but *Lemmings* is a winner if you want to block the brain drain.



DO YOU REALLY WANNA JUMP?

Helping lemmings to help themselves is the only way to save them from early retirement. Simply select a task and bestow it upon whichever lemming is in the most appropriate place to carry it out. Here's what they can do:



BLOCKER: Stands on the spot and prevents other lemmings from passing. Useful when the little critters reach the edge of something they can fall off, or while another lemming is building for example.



FLOATERS: When lemmings fall too far they hit the ground with a splat. One way to ease their descent is to make them floaters. Once selected, they fall gently to the ground with the help of an umbrella.



BASHER: A basher pounds its way through whatever is in front of it. If it is selected to soon though (ie. more than one block before it encounters something to bash) it will revert back to just walking.



BUILDER: If there is a gap that needs to be bridged or a higher level to climb, it's time to select a builder. This lemming will build for a limited period of time before reverting back to its normal state.



BOMBER: When chosen for this sacrificial role, a timer will appear above the lemming's head. When it explodes they will damage the block they are standing on or next to, opening new routes.



MINER: With all the grit of a Welsh collier, this lemming gets out its pick-axe and begins to dig into whatever lies beneath its feet. Only if it hits something impenetrable will it stop mining.



DIGGER: Much the same as a miner except that this time, rather than dig diagonally, the lemming digs straight down. You might want to turn miners into diggers and visa versa.



CLIMBERS: Pretty self-explanatory really. When a lemming finds itself faced with an insurmountable obstacle and no other way to get through, the only option left is to climb.



TURNER: Like a blocker, a turner will stand on the spot, but this time a new direction can be selected rather than sending them back in the opposite direction.

COMMENT

STEVE

Lemmings is one of those games so simple, it seems impossible to cock up.

Obviously not. What started off an addictive game has been ruined by the pointless addition of the 3D. Great, so we can zoom in on the action. But as most levels can be solved from afar, it's pointless. This would be fine if the game offered more in-game innovations, but it is another retread of the old fave, and looking tired for it. Newcomers to *Lemmings* should give it a go, just leave the 3D well alone.

THE GARISH ARENA WHERE BLOCKERS ARE THE STARS.



HERMIE HOPPERHEAD



GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
CONTINUES: INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS: 1

RELEASE	OUT NOW
PRICE	IMPORT
BY	SONY JAPAN
PLAYERS	1



Historically, game scenarios rarely make sense.

Whether it was *Miner Willy* stumbling across twenty underground caverns full of mutant penguins, or an alien invasion where, once again, the player is Earth's last hope, any semblance of normality goes right out of the window. *Hermie Hopperhead*, however, is by far the most extreme example of this.

Sod logic, Hermie is a small chap with what appears to be a rubber glove fixed to his head. While nonchalantly standing on a quiet street corner one day, the strangely-coiffured hero finds himself warped into a world quite unlike our own. With his chums, a series of coloured eggs, Hermie duly explores the garish eight-way-scrolling world he finds himself in, jumping on the animated shoes, petrol lighters and drawing pins which inhabit the otherwise ordinary-looking levels. As if this wasn't kooky enough, short cuts through the land are taken by clambering into the dustbins which punctuate the levels, while re-occurring bubble monsters and huge boss creatures are all present to contribute to this surreal oddity.

THE INTRO SEQUENCE RESEMBLES A BADLY-SCANNED MANGA CARTOON. THE REPRODUCTION IS APPALLING...



WHAT DO POINTS MAKE?

The aforementioned monsters which inhabit the game are fatal to the touch, but Hermie and his egg cohorts can off them simply by jumping on their heads in time-honoured platform game fashion. Killing one of these little buggers reveals a star icon which is duly added to your score panel. At the end of the level a huge egg unveils more stars by way of a bonus, and your egg followers then hang around for their fair share of the collected goodies. If Hermie's generosity stretches to giving one of the ovoids 100 stars, he is rewarded with the evolution of the egg into a bird, turtle or reptile which makes a far better warrior than a poxy egg.



PREDICTABLY, THE SPRING EXTENDS HERMIE'S JUMPING RANGE.



THESE DROPPING WEIGHTS GRACE ONE OF THE MANY CAVERNS.



COMMENT

ROB

After playing on this game for about an hour, that ever so jazzy trumpet starts to sound like the happy-go-lucky music Satan would play as he went about sawing your legs off. At least it starts to sound like this after you find yourself repeating a level yet again because you didn't get it quite right the first time. If Hermie wants to hop over your head by all means let him because you'll find nothing here but a mediocre and excruciatingly annoying 16-bit platform game that's made a desperate bid for the 32-bit big time. And just resembles a hastily-ported Amiga platformer.



LAND OF HOPE AND GLORY

Hermie's adventures take him across a huge map, dotted across which are the game's levels. As our hero picks his way across the map, he begins in a world made up of forests and greenery before eventually dropping in on an underwater stage and those old video game favourites, mud mines and ice worlds. In keeping with these graphical themes, the monsters found within each change to suit the level, with snowmen gracing the ice world and all manner of strange fish and divers swimming around in the murky water world.



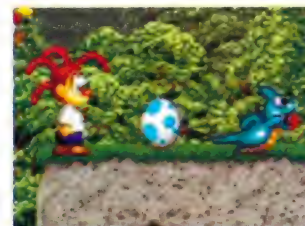
COMMENT

STEVE

I never thought I'd say it, but I've found another game every bit as frustrating as *Rayman*. *Hermie Hopperhead* steals ideas from every platform game hero imaginable, but fails at the first hurdle by creating a game so frustrating it defies belief. Take the underwater stages, for example. As Hermie swims extremely slowly through the water, speedy fish zoom in and, unless your timing is split-second perfect, a life is lost. Similarly, the detection logic is awful, and while it seems as if the Hermie sprite is landing on an enemy to kill it, for no apparent reason the player loses a life instead. There isn't a shred of originality in *Hermie Hopperhead*, and it is a game the Super NES or Megadrive could handle with ease. It doesn't even have the benefit of playability to support it, making it one to definitely ignore.

WHAT CAME FIRST?

As in a healthy, balanced diet, eggs play a major part in Hermie's scrolling antics. In a world where lighters, boots and springs exist side by side, they can be found scattered throughout the world Hermie is exploring. On passing an egg, it sprouts legs and loyally follows our mop-topped hero. Similarly, via a quick press of the triangular button, a hand icon at the top of the screen opens and the egg instantly takes the initiative and starts taking on the enemy as they appear. Despite this new-found gung-ho attitude, though, pressing the triangle button again freezes the errant ovoid in its tracks. If left too long, the eggs start to flash and eventually explode. If Hermie gets to them before they detonate, they once again act all meek and trail his every move.



RATING

57

44

41

67

34

40

OVERALL

GRAPHICS

ANIMATION

SOUND FX

MUSIC

LASTABILITY

38



GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: VARIABLE
CONTINUES: NONE
SKILL LEVELS: 5

RELEASE NOVEMBER

PRICE TBA

BY BULLFROG

PLAYERS 1



Games such as *Theme Park* have, over the years, become known as Sims. This is a good thing for the product, because as a Sim (or, even better, a God-Sim) the emphasis moves away from use of rendered graphics, inventive end-of-level guardians, and small Italian plumbers, opting instead for realism in a variety of occupations and situations. The obvious example is the famous *Sim-City*, but it's been done with a whole host of unlikely themes, ranging from hospitals to restaurants to entire planets.

The main appeal of these products seems to hinge on Joe Public always 'fancying a go' at something otherwise impossible. Very few people would be prepared to start their own Pizza restaurant business just to see if they could do it, but with a clever bit of software, voila! You are Mr Pizza Hut. And it doesn't end there...

So how do you fancy running your very own theme park? Select the location, design the layout, choose the rides, and even control the fine details such as how much ice to fob off your punters with in the cola. On that last point, there are many very clever management features within this seemingly 'just fun' program, so place a fries vender next to a cola stand, alter the fries so that they're incredibly salty, and then watch as your drink sales skyrocket as a result. Clever eh?



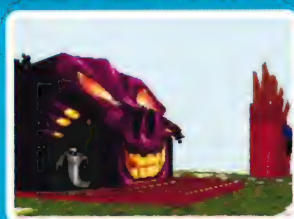
THEME

A WALK IN THE PARK

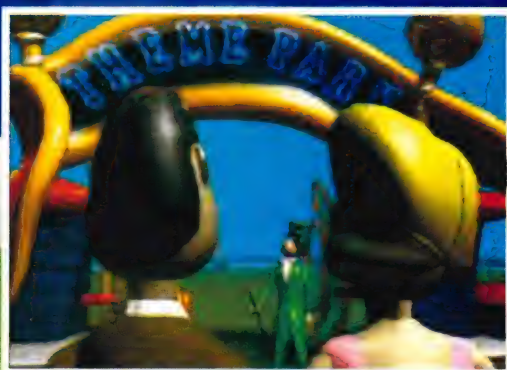
A feature exclusive to the PlayStation version of *Theme Park* is a rendered 'walk-through' of your actual park. Very simply, this allows you to pick a starting point on the map, and then wander around your own creation. Here you can see that the main screen shows a ghost ride next to a fries stand...



...and here we are slap bang in the middle of it. A virtual Theme Park if you will. Unfortunately, this feature serves no particular purpose, and it's always an empty park (so you can't see any of the little people). Attractive stuff none the less.



The other use of rendered graphics within the game comes when you choose to have a go on one of the rides in your park. Here you're treated to a quick 'punter's view' of the ride, accompanied by the appropriate tune. This is 'stock film', however, and never changes. In fact, it often features background scenery that doesn't exist in your park (rollercoasters that aren't there, for instance.) This, incidentally, is the tube ride.



AS WELL AS DOING WELL THROUGH EXCITING RIDES AND INTERESTING STALLS, YOU NEED TO MAKE SURE YOUR PARK HAS THE BEST IN LANDSCAPING, SO SPARE NO EXPENSE WHEN IT COMES TO TREES, LAMPS AND HERBACEOUS BORDERS.

PARK

COMMENT

STEVE

Theme Park is a classic which seems to get better with every conversion. This Sony version has all the bells and whistles of the PC game and is as gripping and immediately playable, but of course as owners of a machine with astounding 3D capabilities, we now get to wander around our parks, too. However, the 3D bits seem a bit pointless to me. Yes, they are very impressive, but once you've seen them, it soon gets dull. Nevertheless, a welcome addition to the PlayStation fold.

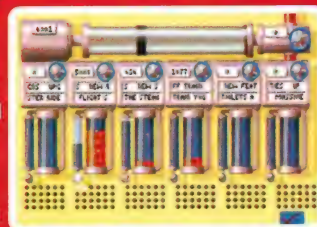


REVIEW



PARK LIFE

You start with only a few very basic rides and stands. If you want to progress from the likes of playground bouncy castles, you need to put a bit of money into research, and this where you can do just that. Nicely



illustrated with a strange waterworks affair, here you can regulate how much money (er...water) you want to spend overall, and then channel that into specific areas such as rides, facilities, and even the quality of staff training. Let's bung a ton into new rides...

And here's the fruit of my labour — a nice big water tube ride. Each ride can be tweaked in a number of ways, so set the maximum number of punters on at a time, the length of the ride, and how fast it goes. Watch out with the speed though, because though high speed equals excitement, it can also lead to accidents and accelerated ride wear and tear.





STAND BY YOUR MAN

Even though you hang, God-like, miles above the park, you do tend to get the feeling that you're all alone in this harsh cruel world. Never fear, though, because help is at hand in the form of an enthusiastic staff.



HANDYMAN

This chap is damned handy (hence the name), because not only will he wander randomly around your premises, picking up litter, scooping up vomit, and mowing the lawns, but he'll also patrol 'zones' which you can set with a simply drag of the mouse. You need to manage this effectively if you want to get the most out of each staff member.



GUARD

As anyone who's been on holiday to Spain will testify, thugs and trouble makers know no boundaries as far as fair game goes. However, get one of these party-pooing guards in, and he'll keep an eye on the crowd, dealing with any bad elements that try to enter the park.



MECHANIC

If you set your rides at the sort of speed the kids love the most, you'll find wear and tear will eventually take its toll. It is, then, for such occasions that these guys are invaluable. Should smoke starts pouring from a bouncy castle, you can bet your bum that it's about to explode. It's at this point that you should send in your spanner-weilding experts to close the ride down and fix the thing.



SHARK MAN

Long queues for rides? Bad weather? Little people getting bored? No problem - Shark Man is here! Yep, always a favourite with the kids, dress some unemployed bloke in a boiling hot animal rubber suit, and get him to scare the kids to death! In actual fact, these guys are great, and a real Bronx cheer (and look, there's Chicken Man too!).



THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO REALLY FIND OUT WHAT PEOPLE THINK OF YOUR PARK, AND THAT'S TO ASK 'EM. You can not only see what percentage of the punters are happy, unhappy or undecided, but you can see what they're thinking. Because this shot is taken from a fairly young game (and I've yet to sort out food) most people are just grumbling that they're hungry. **BAH. LET THEM EAT MACFILLETS, THAT'S WHAT I SAY.**



COMMENT

MATT

Similar to my review of X-COM

last month, *Theme Park* isn't going to be one of those PlayStation games you dazzle your mates with. The rendered graphics found within the game are attractive (particularly the intro) but serve no purpose at all, and as such must be taken out of the equation when awarding a score. Fortunately, the game is a bloody good one, and suffers in no way from this. *Theme Park* works as both a silly-bit-of-fun and as a serious management game - and with the player being able to choose from three game types, each with a varying level of involvement, you can choose whether you just want to enjoy watching people on your rides, or whether you want to oversee fine details such as how much ice cream to order each month. Where perhaps *Theme Park* does falter, is at exactly the same point as every other Sim game ever, and that's when you've come to understand how things work. The problem with this is that, apart from setting things on the 'Completely Unreasonable' skill level, once you know how to set out your park and best furnish it, you can't lose. Still, there's a lot of fun to be had with *Theme Park*, and value for money scores very highly indeed.

HELP IS ON HAND, THANKS TO THE MAGICAL PARK KEEPER, WHO POPS UP EVERY NOW AND THEN WITH ADVICE. TICKETS TOO CHEAP YOU SAY? FAIR ENOUGH. AND CHECK OUT THOSE SUPER-LOOS!



RATING 81 | 80 | 79 | 80 | 86 | 85 OVERALL

GRAPHICS

ANIMATION

SOUND FX

MUSIC

PLAYABILITY

85

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LOADED

GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
CONTINUES: INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS: 5

RELEASE OCTOBER

PRICE £39.99

BY CREMLIN

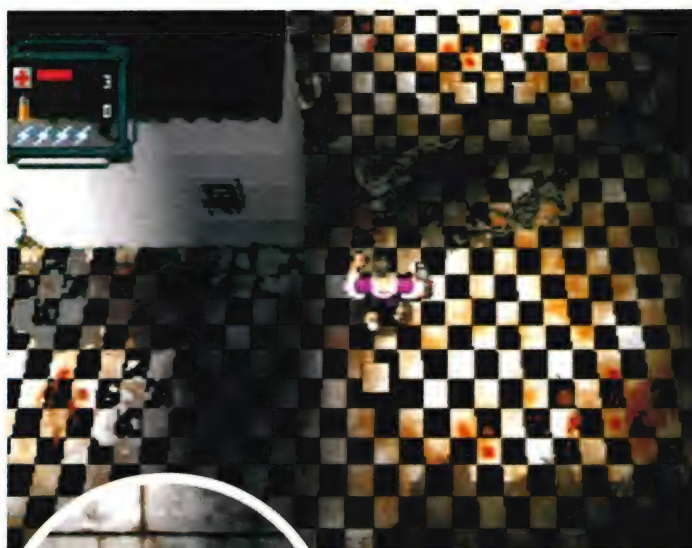
PLAYERS 1 - 2



Doing 'bird' in the 'Scrubs' is not a very attractive thought. But let us imagine for a minute a prison that's infinitely worse. Somewhere so bad in fact, that the inhabitants of Earth decided to dump it on another planet. Imagine then, doing 'space bird': slopping out in an anti-gravity environment, finding out that your cell mate is Darth Vader, getting quirky looks from ET in the showers! No thank you!

Moreover, these night-mare images suggest that the only constructive thing to do in prison is try and escape, something which the six characters in *Loaded* are violently attempting to do. Fortunately for them, they've managed to get their grubby mitts on some blood splattering hardware in the shape of missile launchers, machine guns and flame throwers. And they'll need it all because every level is crammed with enemies, taking the shape of everything from heavily armed wardens to the prison's very own breed of giant rats.

But if that's likely to deter you from seeking your freedom, just imagine spending yet another night in a cell where the only sound is Darth Vader's suspiciously heavy breathing.



COMMENT

STEVE

Technically, this is a very clever game. Some of the smart bomb effects are stunning, and the light effects and dark corridors are particularly effective. However, the game-play itself isn't quite so innovative and, while the carnage is mindlessly enjoyable, a degree of repetition soon sets in — one which no amount of fancy visual effects can counter. *Loaded* invites comparison to the likes of *The Chaos Engine* and *Atari Gauntlet* coin-op, but its simplicity makes it a somewhat poorer cousin. *Gauntlet*, for example, inspired pure co-operation and it was imperative for players to work together in order to progress. Granted, *Loaded*'s 'hard' attitude inspires duping your partner, but this rarely benefits the game. In the short-term, *Loaded* is fun, but longevity is the one factor it lacks.



FLAME-THROWER OR NOT, YOUR ODDS AREN'T LOOKING TOO HOT.

WOBBLE BOMB



SPIRAL BOMB

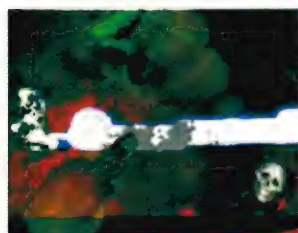


SPRAY BOMB



DANGER BREASTS

One thing you'll notice immediately about *Loaded* is its eyebrow-raising presentation. Butch, a huge meat head of a man, has a fondness for dresses, Mamma wears a nappy and a pair of bunny wunnie slippers, Vox dresses like someone Hugh Grant would bump into on Sunset Boulevard, and Bouncer uses missiles with breasts for warheads. As for Fwank, well, the name says it all! Sigmund Freud step this way!



COMMENT

ROB

Shooting, that's what this game's all about. Simply walk from level to level blasting absolutely everything in sight, grabbing the various power-ups, and then blasting some more! In this respect, *Loaded* is very rewarding, packed with impressive weapons and bombs, all laid out in environments that are visually stunning and full of enemy sprites to keep you on your toes. This stylistic professionalism extends to the characters themselves, each of them subject to an appealing quirkiness. Unfortunately, the same can't be said for the game-play. Because each character plays in exactly the same way it doesn't matter who you pick to play as. As for the levels, action packed as they are, there just isn't the variety to really keep you involved. Anyone who loves their games fast and furious will no doubt get a kick out of *Loaded*, but ultimately it lacks the depth to make it a truly impressive title.

THE SPECIALS

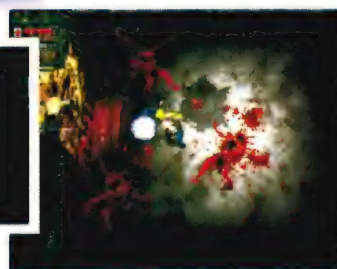
Trying to escape a maximum security prison is no easy task. Some spend decades digging away with spoons or developing elaborate plans involving paper mache models. Others, like the characters in *Loaded*, have the advantage of some serious firepower. This extends to the unique special bombs that each character has in their possession. They all do about the same amount of damage but the way in which they do it is unique.

WOBBLE BOMB: This is Mamma's special, making the whole screen warp and ripple like a stone dropped in water.

SPIRAL BOMB: Vox is responsible for this beautiful cascade of what look like blue ellipses.

Just wait for the dead bodies!

SPRAY BOMB: With typical transvestite brava-do, Butch's special sees a ring of fire expanding to destroy everything on screen.



HORRIDORS



Not knowing what's round the corner or along the next dark corridor is an uneasy feeling. But you'll need to do plenty of exploring to find all of the access cards that enable you to go through blast doors and explore new areas. Regular references to the map are also essential to make sure everywhere has been appropriately decimated.



RATING

85

78

80

86

70

82

OVERALL

75

GRAPHICS

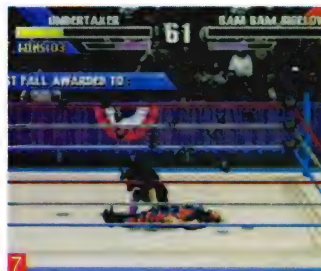
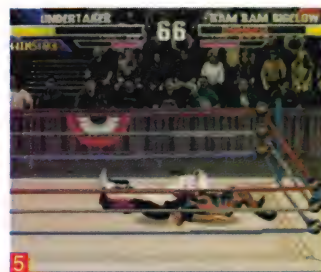
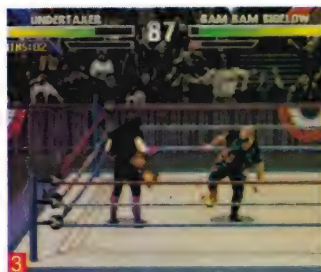
ANIMATION

SOUND FX

MUSIC

LASTABILITY

PLAYABILITY



WWF

WRESTLEMANIA

GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY:MEDIUM
CONTINUES:INFINITE
SKILL LEVELS:5

RELEASE OCTOBER

PRICE £39.99

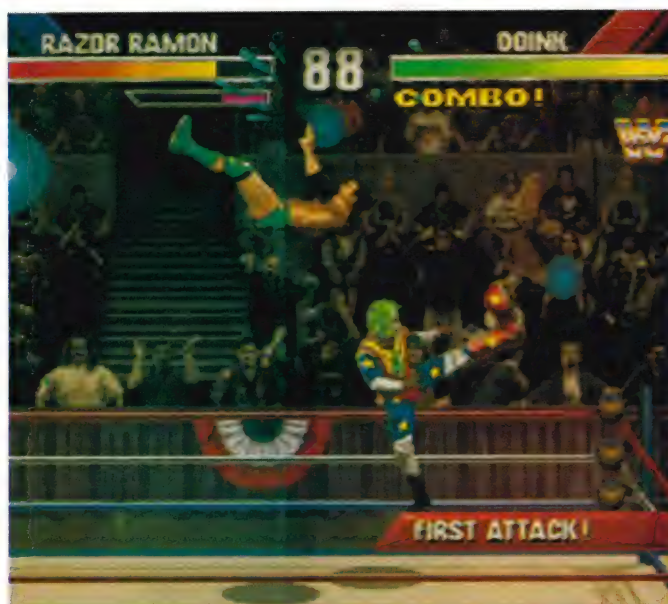
BY ACCLAIM

PLAYERS 1-4



It's not difficult to spot the differences between British and American wrestling. British wrestling packs out the civic halls with

eager OAP's, a glint of blood lust in their eyes every time they turn from their knitting to shout abuse at Giant Haystacks. The Americans on the other hand pack out superdomes with swarms of manic disciples and merchandising casualties, every last one screaming homage to their favourite musclebound megalomaniac. It comes as no surprise then that Big Daddy and his portly chums have yet to make it on to a console game, whereas the latest is *WWF Wrestlemania*, converted for the PlayStation from the coin-op. It features eight of the most famous wrestlers on the circuit, each of them sporting their own bizarre and ruthless attack methods. Like the arcade, players have the chance to engage in a madhouse two-on-two bout, go head-to-head with another player, or try for the championship. Expect all of the razzmatazz and showmanship of the real thing with some appropriately exaggerated gymnastics to boot. Don't expect to see the granny's packing out the front rows though.



SECONDS OUT!

There's nothing like a good fight I'm sure you'll agree, and here for your entertainment is a blow by blow journey through Bam Bam Bigelow's encounter with The Undertaker. Will it be the fat man's day, or will the figure of death come and box him away? Let's find out...

- 1 They ready themselves for combat...
- 2...The Undertaker gets in the first attack by releasing wolves on Bam Bam...
- 3...but Bam Bam is quick to respond with a super kick...
- 4...Continuing the onslaught he makes a fire jump from the ropes...
- 5...But he misses! The Undertaker takes advantage with



LAUGH-NELSON

If you thought the most exuberant move in the wrestling hand-book was the half-nelson, then you obviously haven't seen what these WWF stars can do. Out of their TARDIS-like pants they pull whole manner of things, be it clubs, swords, or even a pack of wolves. Nearly all the special moves are what you might call larger than life, from Bam Bam Bigelow's fire jump to Yokozuna's swing throw. There are even outrageous combos to discover which involve over 20 hits!

COMMENT

STEVE

I hate anything to do with WWF.

The wrestlers are just a bunch of tossers as far as I'm concerned, and their staged bouts every bit as tiresome to watch as those of Giant Haystacks and Big Daddy in the Seventies. However, Acclaim's *Wrestlemania* is one of the most entertaining fighting games I have played. It completely over-plays the OTT nature of the real thing, with players pulling off moves more suitable to *NBA Jam* than a game based on fat blokes in leotards — and this works to the game's advantage perfectly. The on-screen wrestlers all come equipped with deadly special moves which, while incredible to watch, are no match top a good old-fashioned kick in the nuts, and the many handslaps and falls ensure that *Wrestlemania* never becomes a game where one move beats all. A brilliant surprise hit.

TAG TEAM

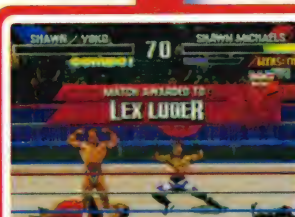
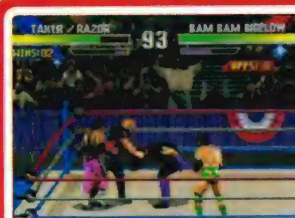
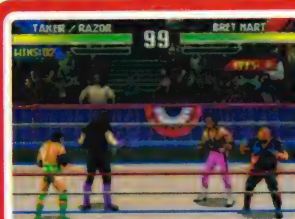
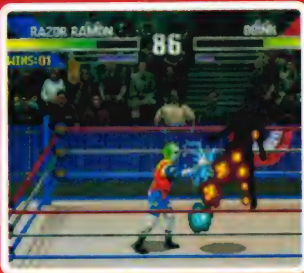
WWF gives you the chance to get four players in the ring at once using the link up cable. The fight that ensues is real slapstick mayhem!

COMMENT

ROB

I'm about as far as you get from

being a wrestling fan, which is one of the reasons I've never had the desire to play *WWF* in any of its incarnations. Yet fate has seen to it that it crosses my path, and I can honestly say I'm grateful it has because *WWF Wrestlemania* is lots of fun. This is thanks in the most part to the diversity of the moves and the humour with which they are executed, be it the appearance of a huge weapon out of nowhere or a 20 hit combo. Another really attractive quality in *WWF* is how easily accessible it is. Getting to grips with the controls is no problem, and the fast gameplay has you involved right from the start. The drawback is that you move through the computer competition quite quickly but it is in two-player that you can really show off your special moves and outrageous combos. It's fair to say that *WWF* doesn't have the lasting appeal that a lot of beat 'em ups have, but for me it's the sense of slapstick pantomime that makes *WWF* worth wrestling with.



MICHAELS AND RAZOR BOTH GO FOR THAT MIAMI VICE LOOK.



a spirit throw...

6...It works and he's ready to finish off Bam Bam...

7...As he pins him, there is a ceremonial release of bats.

8 Up and recovered, Bam Bam is ready for the second round...

9...Quick on the attack again, The Undertaker does a sliding choke move...

10...Bam Bam counters by using his strength to lift his opponent...

11...and slam him onto the canvas!...

12...but The Undertaker is fast to his feet, this time securing a head lock...

13...and then a devastating upper cut! Surely it's the end for Bam Bam?...

14...and it is! The Undertaker stands victorious! Bigelow lies in defeat!

RATING

80

78

88

86

80

85

OVERALL

83

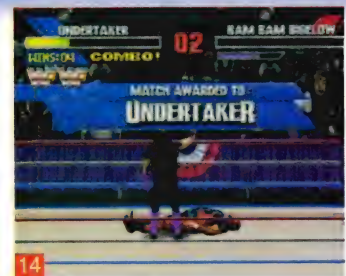
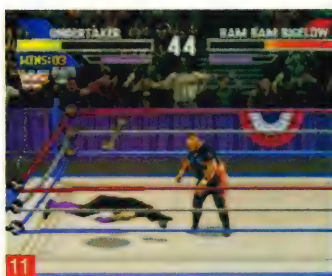
GRAPHICS

ANIMATION

SOUND FX

MUSIC

PLAYABILITY



GAME SPEC

GAME DIFFICULTY: MEDIUM
CONTINUOUS: N/A
SKILL LEVELS: 1

RELEASE: OCTOBER

PRICE: £39.99

BY: SONY

PLAYERS: 1

DISC WORLD



Terry Pratchett? The name certainly doesn't ring any bells with me, although I would seem to be in a minority. He's the author of the highly popular *Discworld* books, tales which mix history, fantasy and a touch of quintessentially English humour. So popular is the Tezza in fact, that Psygnosis saw fit to convert

Discworld to the PC where it has proved equally successful. Now it journeys to the PlayStation with a number of famous voices bringing life to the characters. *Monty Python*er Eric Idle plays Rincewind, the wizard hero who the player controls, Tony Robinson (he of *Baldrick* fame) assumes a whole number of roles and Jon Pertwee pops up now and then injecting a touch *Doctor Who* into his characters.

Discworld itself is a vast and very round city. Things would be fine and dandy if it wasn't for the dragon currently terrorising the populace, leaving the heroics up to the fumbling Rincewind. Starting at the university, the idea is to explore just about everywhere, chatting with the locals and picking up whatever might prove useful as the game progresses. A vast game in four acts, *Discworld* involves more in the way of brain tingling puzzles than explosive action, basing itself on the more cerebral appeal of the books. Thinking beards on please!

HUMOUR THEM

Because Rincewind spends so much time yapping away with strangers, he often has the choice of how to talk to someone. He might want to offer them a friendly greeting or a sarcastic one, ask them a question, show anger or say goodbye. The manner in which you choose to speak determines the kind of information a character is prepared to offer, so size them up before you dive into conversation.



COMMENT

ROB

I have to start by admitting two things: firstly, I've never read a Terry Pratchett book and secondly, this is the kind of game that generally has no appeal for me whatsoever. It's very much a matter of exploring places, picking up information and objects, exploring some more, using objects etc. The action is kept to a minimum, replaced in the most part by long sequences of dialogue between Rincewind and whoever he runs into on his travels. These conversations are always peppered with puns rather than jokes, ideal for the sixth-former perhaps, but a pain in the ass when you have to keep clicking through them to move on. In its favour, *Discworld* is a huge and very complex game and certainly no walk over. One for the fans.

THE INN

Scare the wits out of the lodger and then grab what you can from the safe and the jewellery box. Thanks to the time warping phenomena of L-space you'll have to do this more than once.



DRLO



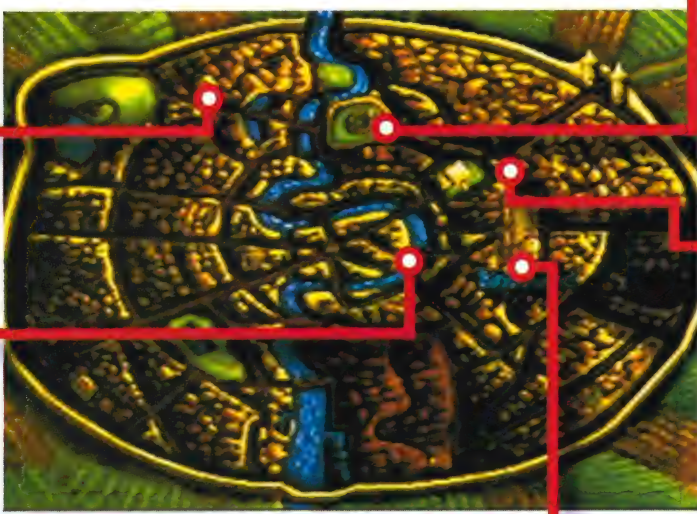
UNSEEN UNIVERSITY



This is where the adventure begins and it is somewhere you'll be regularly returning to. The library hides the mystery of L-space that only the primitive librarian can reveal. The University also houses the Arch Chancellor, the man who issues your orders.

DISCOGRAPHY

Discworld is actually a city rather than a world, with a wall and city gate to prove it. All of it will have to be explored if Rincewind is to save the people from extermination at the hands of the dragon. Here's a taster of life in the mediaeval metropolis...



THE STREET



Full of shops, you'll find yourself regularly returning to the Street. There's the toy shop where important items like string and a hogs-father doll are purchased, or the barber shop where pick-pocketing a hair roller from the camp hairdresser is the surreal objective.

Learn the art of pick-pocketing from the street urchin. There's also a psychiatrist here that you find yourself returning to as circumstances get all the more confusing. And why not let out some pent-up frustrations by throwing a tomato at the tax collector?

COMMENT

MATT

Unlike Rob, I'm actually a fan of the *Discworld* books and, in fact, in the process of reading a new novel at the moment. However, the patience threshold when reading a book is much greater than that of when playing a game, so the last thing you want is tons and tons of long speeches being forced on you every minute. The humour doesn't work incredibly well, with most of the jokes being of the overkill-metaphor style. On the plus side, there's a huge game lurking within, and the puzzles are fairly interesting. Of course, the only problem being that you have to endure hours of conversation to know what to do.

THE SQUARE



THE DRUM

This is the disreputable alehouse. Have a chat with the barman, start a fight and then steal the drum stick from the sign outside. When you return to it after this turmoil you'll find it's called The Broken Drum.



RATING

80 | 72 | 85 | 78 | 68 | 70

OVERALL

GRAPHICS
ANIMATION
SOUND FX
MUSIC
PLAYABILITY

71

IMPORT ROUND-UP

POWER SERVE 3D TENNIS

BY: Ocean US

When a Tennis game offers in-game players with names like Andre Legacy you'd be forgiven for thinking a crap sense of humour is as bad as things can get. Sadly, this US import of Ocean's forthcoming PAL release falls at several other hurdles, too, making the PlayStation's first Wimbledon sim a missed opportunity. Granted, the programmers have tried to make the game as smart-looking as possible, with multiple viewpoints, rendered polygon players, and a split-screen two-player mode, but along the way the gameplay has been sadly neglected.

Take for example some of the most fundamental gameplay faults imaginable. The worst of these is, in default mode (with player one in the foreground and the opponent in the distance), the second player's controls which are arse-about-face. When the user instinctively moves their player left to hit a shot, they stagger right instead! Granted, this is that character's left, but it makes for an unnecessarily hard to play game. Other faults include a view where the player at the top of the screen throws the ball out of sight, making serving extremely difficult; the need to pre-empt a shot by several seconds; and slow-moving characters which make rallies nigh-on impossible. Ocean's UK office are insisting on a myriad of changes to this US version, and as such we advise waiting for their imminent PAL release which, even if only a handful of faults are sorted, will knock this into next week.



THE SPLIT-SCREEN IS MADE SLIGHTLY CONFUSING BY THE SLOW SCROLLING OF THE PLAY AREA.



OVERALL

48

TACKLING THE ASTEROIDS IS SIMPLY A MATTER OF FLYING ABOVE THEM! HARDLY CUTTING EDGE STUFF...



BY: Taito

A zeitgeist, in case you don't know, is an event or phenomena that sums up the spirit of an age or culture. The arrival of Cadbury's Twirls for instance, was the zeitgeist signifying both the demise of the Ripple and the popularity of twin bar snacks. That's not a very good example, but you get the picture. Where the nature of a zeitgeist fits in to this game is anyone's guess, but it's probably in the realisation that no matter how good a machine the PlayStation might be, there's no escaping bad games. And boy, is this bad! As far as cultural phenomena go this is a positive shitegeist! A 3D shoot 'em up of the most banal kind, Zeitgeist offers nothing in the way of variety or excitement. It is slow and clumsy, the player simply moving the cursor sluggishly around the screen and blasting away. It doesn't even feature a single power-up so there's no chance of acquiring some decent weapons! Just about the only thing to raise the temperature gauge a notch or two is the option to change perspective and sit in the cockpit. Oh, and the nicely rendered intro sequence. And for these privileges you can expect Zeitgeist to be a snip at £70!

ZEITGEIST 'BORROWS' ASPECTS FROM AFTER BURNER AND, MOST NOTABLY, GALAXY FORCE.



ONE OF THE RENDERED IMAGES FROM THE LENGTHY INTRODUCTORY SEQUENCE.



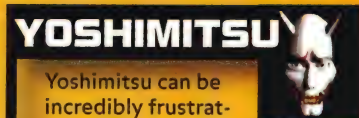
LOCKING ON TO AN ENEMY FIGHTER IS EFFECTED WHENEVER THE FIREBUTTON IS PRESSED AND AN ENEMY IS IN THE VICINITY. A HOMING MISSILE IS THEN LAUNCHED WITH A SECOND PRESS.



OVERALL

43

TIPS



YOSHIMITSU
Yoshimitsu can be incredibly frustrating to fight simply because of his tremendously powerful spinning kicks. These moves are identical to those of KUNIMITSU (so we won't both-er repeating them again!)

Yoshimitsu's 'throw' moves are:
▲ and ● together for a Trip Smash.
■ and X together for a Flying Slam.

Six Of The Best
Roundhouse Mid-kick
X, roll to ●.
Forward Cartwheel
Towards, towards (hold), X and ● together.
Knee Rush
Towards, towards, ●.
Cartwheel/Diving Corkscrew
Perform a Forward Cartwheel, press ■ and ▲ together.
Tornado Spin
Away and ■ together (up to five times, but this gets dizzy).
Tornado Sweep
Away/down and X (up to five times, but this gets dizzy).

Trip Smash



TEKKEN

Six Of The Best: Part 2

Welcome to part two of our Tekken guide, where rather than just printing every joy-pad combination known to man, we've painstakingly plucked what we feel are the best moves for each character. This month: We conclude the good guys with Michelle and Yoshimitsu, reveal all eight main characters' VERY SPECIAL attacks, and then it's on to the bad guys. Grrr!



MICHELLE CHAN

Until you get to grips with Michelle she seems like a fairly average fighter, but once you start pulling off her powerful kicks and uppercut combinations, it's a very different story.

Michelle's 'throw' moves are:
▲ and ● together, for hook slammer.
■ and X together, for bridge slammer (also from behind for reverse).

Six Of The Best

Double Fist:
Towards, towards, ■ and ▲ together.
Sweep/Uppercut combo:
Down and ● together, ■.
Power Vertical kick:
Down, release and ● together.
Uppercut/Hammer Combo:
Down, release and ▲ together, ■.
Kick Combo:
Towards and ● together, down and ● together, ●, ● (try both holding and releasing down on the last kick)
Four-hit Punch Combo:
▲, roll to ■, ■, ▲.

Sweep/Uppercut



HARD POUNCES, 10-STRING COMBINATIONS, AND UNBLOCKABLE ATTACKS!

Apart from seemingly billions of moves, each character in *Tekken* also has that extra something special to pull out of the bag at an opportune moment. Have a go at some of these beauties!

LAW

10-STRING ATTACK

Tap down/towards and ■, ▲, ▲, ■, X, X, X, ●, X, ●.

UNBLOCKABLE ATTACK

Dashing Fist: Down/away ■ and ▲ (all together).

PAUL

10-STRING ATTACK

■, ▲, X, ▲, ■, ▲, ■, ●, ▲ roll to ■.

KAZUYA

HARD POUNCE

Hopback Punch: Up/towards X and ● (all together).

10-STRING ATTACK

Towards, towards and ▲, ■, ▲, ▲, X, ●, ●, ■, ▲, ■.

NINA

10-STRING ATTACK

■-▲-■-▲ (rolled), X, X, ▲, ■, ▲, ▲.

UNBLOCKABLE ATTACK

Crane Chop: Down/away ■ and ▲ (all together)

JACK

HARD POUNCE

Cannonball: Up/towards X and ● (all together).

10-STRING ATTACK

Down and ▲, ■ x3, ▲, ■, ▲, ■, ■ and ▲ together, ■ and ▲ together.

KING

HARD POUNCE

Elbow Drop: Up/towards (or up) ■ and ▲ (all together) OR...

Knee Drop: Up/towards X and ● (all together)

10-STRING ATTACK

■-▲-■ (rolled), ■, ▲, ● x3, ■, X.

YOSHIMITSU

HARD POUNCE

Hopback Stomp: Up/towards X and ● (all together).

10-STRING ATTACK

■-▲-■ (rolled), ● x4, ■ x3.

UNBLOCKABLE ATTACK

Sword Slash: Down/away and ■ together.
Sword Skewer: Away, away and ■ together.

MICHELLE

HARD POUNCE

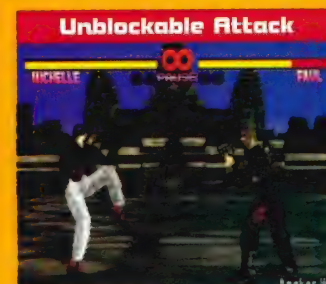
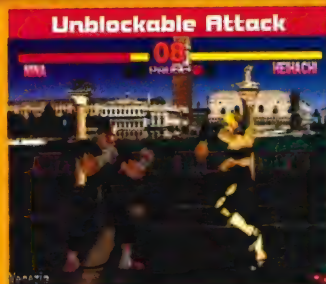
Hopback Stomp: Up/towards X and ● (all together).

10-STRING ATTACK

▲-■ (rolled), ■, ▲, X, X, X, ●, ●, ■.

UNBLOCKABLE ATTACK

Running Uppercut: Away, away, away (hold until leg rises), ■.



LEE CHOW LANG

The nasty version of Law, complete with spinning flipkick and fast combination kicks.

Lee's 'throw' moves are:

▲ and ● together for a Face Smash.

■ and X together for a Backside Takedown.

Towards, towards (hold), X and ● together for a knee bash.

Six Of The Best

Flipkick

Down, up/away OR up OR up/towards plus ● (Or X and ● together for Power Flipkick)

Double Roundhouse/High Kick
Down and ●, ●, X, ●.

Spinning Slide

Towards, towards (hold), X and ● together.

Jump Kick/Roundhouse

Towards, towards, X, ●, ●.

Uppercut/Punch/Backhand

Down/towards and ■, ▲, ▲.

Triple High kick

X, X, X.

Flip-kick



KUMA

Er... a bear — and a bloody big one at that! He looks cumbersome, but armed with many of Jack's moves, this attractive rug is a right git.

Kuma's 'throw' moves are:

▲ and ● together for a Bear Hug (with Towards for a Headbutt.)

■ and X together for a Blanket Fall.

Six Of The Best

Double Hammer

Down/towards plus ■ and ▲ together.

Triple Windmill

Down, towards and ■, ▲, ■.

Sitting Punches

Down X and ● together, ■, ▲, ■, ▲.

Mega Crouch Combo

Down, ■ x3, ▲, ■, ▲.

Sandwich Clap

Towards, towards (hold), ■ and ▲ together.

Punch/Elbow Rush

▲, ■.

Combo



WANG GIN LEI

It seems an unlikely comparison, but Wang is actually a derivative of Michelle. Wang is a delight to watch, as he makes up for his lack of size with some stunning moves.

Wang's 'throw' moves are:
▲ and ● together for a Hip Throw.

■ and X together for a Double Head Kick.

Away and ▲, ■ and ▲ together for a Reverse Check.

Six Of The Best Sky Uppercut

Down/towards and ▲ together, ▲.

Chi Release

Toward, toward, ■ and ▲ together.

Strong Uppercut

Down, release and ▲.

3-Part Sweep Combo

Towards and ●, down and ●, (hold) down and ● OR (release) ● OR ■ (for Uppercut).

Double Hammer

Down/towards, ■, ■.

5 Punch Attack

▲-■ (rolled), ■, ■, ▲.

Back Lash



ANNA

Being the younger sister of Nina, it's no surprise to find that they share many of the same moves. For my money, however, Nina's much more sexy, and jiggles beautifully when she wins!

Anna's 'throw' moves are:

▲ and ● together for a Reverse Toss.

■ and X together for an Arm Throw.

Towards ■ and X together for a Handstand Toss.

Down/towards, down/towards plus ■ and ▲ all together for an Elbow Bash.

Down, down/towards, towards plus ■ and ▲ together for a Chin Bash.

Six Of The Best

Triple Kick/Roundhouse

Down/towards and X, X, X, ●.

Kick/Chop/Double Punch

Down/towards and X, ■, ▲, ▲.

Flying Kick

Towards x3, X.

Flip Tumble

Towards, towards, ●.

Hop Kick/Roundhouse

Up/towards and ●, X, ●.

Kick/Spinning Chop

Down/towards and X together, ■.

Elbow Bash



POWER JACK

No prizes for guessing that this enormous fella is a prototype for Jack, with the skin removed, and sharp pointy bits everywhere.

Power Jack's 'throw' moves are:

▲ and ● together for a Blanket Fall.

■ and X together for a One Arm Lifter.

Six Of The Best

Triple Drill Punch

Down/away and ■ together, ■, ■.

Lightening Hammer

Down and ■ together.

Double Hammer

Down/towards ■ and ▲ all together.

Jab/Knee Swing

Down and ▲-■ (rolled)

Power Punch

Away, down/away, down, down/towards and ▲ together.

Jumping Knockdown

Up and ■ together.

Arm-Lifter



ARMOUR KING

A rival wrestler to King, this git is one tough cookie to take down. Learn his moves though, and you're on to a winner.

Armour King's 'throw' moves are:

▲ and ● together for a Suplex.

■ and X together for a Knee Bash.

Six Of The Best

Piledriver

Down, down/towards, towards, ■.

Scissor Flip

Towards, away, down/away, down, down/towards, towards and ■.

Crouching Uppercut

Down, towards plus ▲.

Jumping Hammer

Up/towards plus ■ and ▲ all together.

Dragon Punch

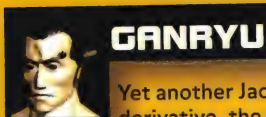
Towards, down, down/towards, ■.

Spinning Drop Kick

Towards x3, X and ● together.

Piledriver





GANRYU

Yet another Jack derivative, the pie-loving Sumo-wrestler uses his weight and fast hand slaps to wear you down.

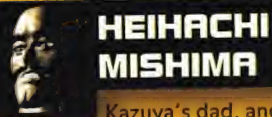
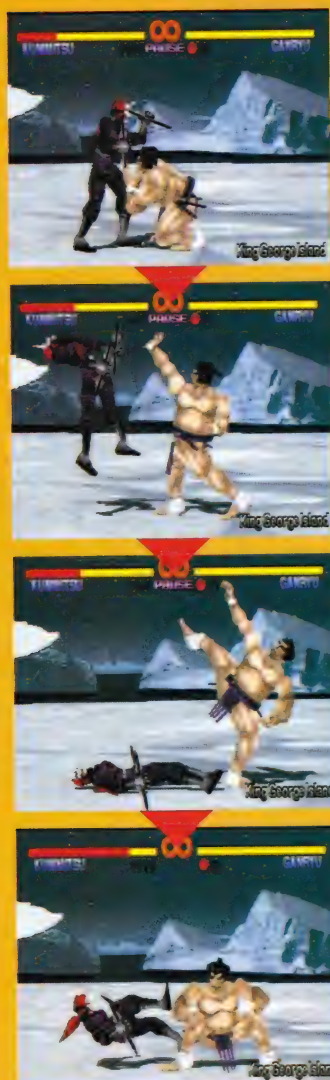
Ganryu's 'throw' moves are:

▲ and ● together for a Shoulder Throw.
■ and X together for a Crescent Throw.
Away plus X and ● together for a Reverse Toss.

Six Of The Best Triple Slap

Down/towards (hold) plus ■-▲-■ (rolled).
Rising Palm
Down/towards and ▲ together.
Sumo Palm Rush
Down and ▲ together.
Sumo Foot Stomp
Down and ● together.
Hundred Hand Slap
Towards and ■-▲-■-▲-■-▲-■-▲ (rolled).
Sandwich Clap
Towards, towards (hold), ■ and ▲ together.

Rising Palm



HEIHACHI MISHIMA

Kazuya's dad, and the game's big boss. Not a chap to be messing around with, Heihachi has a number of massive energy sapping moves, ● including an agonising neck snap!

Heihachi's 'throw' moves are:

▲ and ● together for a Piledriver.
■ and X together for a Noogie Cracker.
Towards, towards plus ■ and ▲ together for a headbutt.

Six Of The Best Hammer/Power Punch

(Tap) down plus ■, towards plus ▲.
Dragon Punch
Towards, down, down/towards, ■.
Triple Sweep/Axe Kick
Towards, down, down/towards (hold) plus ●, ●, ●, (release down/towards) ●.
Jumping Spin Kick/Sweep
(Tap) up/towards plus ●, ●.
Double Walking Uppercut
Down/towards plus ■, ■.
Double Axe Kick
Down, (release) and ●, ●.

Dragon Punch



HARD POUNCES, 10-STRING COMBINATIONS, AND UNBLOCKABLE ATTACKS!

LEE

10-STRING ATTACK

(Tap) down/towards plus ■, ▲, ▲, ■, X, X, X, ●, X, ●.

UNBLOCKABLE ATTACK

Dashing Fist: Down/away plus ■ and ▲ all together.

KUMA

10-STRING ATTACK

Down and ▲, ■ x3, ▲, ■, ▲, ■, ■ and ▲, ■ and ▲.

HARD POUNCE

Cannonball: Up/towards plus X and ● all together.

WANG

10-STRING ATTACK

▲-■ (rolled), ■, ▲, X, X, X, ●, ●, ■.

HARD POUNCE

Hopback Stomp: Up/towards plus X and ● all together.

ANNA

10-STRING ATTACK

■-▲-■ (rolled), X, X, ▲, ■, ▲, ▲.

UNBLOCKABLE ATTACK

Crane Chop: Down/away plus ■ and ▲ all together.

P. JACK

10-STRING ATTACK

Down and ▲, ■ x3, ▲, ■, ▲, ■, ■ and ▲, ■ and ▲.

UNBLOCKABLE ATTACK

Windup Punch: Away, away/down, down, down/towards (do this until count reaches 5) then tap ■.

HARD POUNCE

Low Cannonball: Up/towards X and ● all together.

ARMOUR KING

10-STRING ATTACK

■-▲-■ (rolled), ■, ▲, ● x3, ■, X.

HARD POUNCE

Elbow Drop: Up/towards plus ▲ and ● all together.
Knee Drop: Up/towards plus X and ● all together.

GANRYU

HARD POUNCE

Low Cannonball: Up/towards X and ● all together.

KUNITZSU

8-STRING ATTACK

■-▲-■ (rolled), circle x4, ■.

HARD POUNCE

Hopback Stomp: Up/towards plus X and ● all together.

HEIHACHI

HARD POUNCE

Hopback Punch: Up/towards plus ▲ and ● all together.



Unblockable Attack



NOT ONLY BUT ALSO...

As is always the way with these games, there are a number of tricks and cheats hidden deep within the program...

GALAGA GALAGA

Having trouble with the challenge stage? Try this. While the game is loading up, hold UP, L1, the green triangle, and the blue X. You'll now find that you have twin craft, and everything becomes every so slightly bloody easy!

THE DEVIL KAZUYA

There's a hidden character within Tekken, and if you can complete all eight of the challenge stages he's yours to play with (for what it's worth!). The key to this is completing the first stage in under 18.5 seconds so that you get awarded the twin craft. Unfortunately, the aforementioned cheat doesn't work with this. Doh.

X-COM

ENEMY UNKNOWN



The key to success in this excellent MicroProse strategy/action game is efficient research. If you don't keep improving your armour, weapons, and general technology level, you won't last five minutes once the various aliens take off their kid-gloves. When you start the game you only have three areas to develop, but each discovery opens up new paths for research. Understand a plasma pistol and you'll be able to look into plasma rifles, plasma cannons, and heavy plasma weaponry. There are ways to 'jump the queue' so to speak, by collecting and studying items that appear further down the research line, so feel free to find a laser rifle at an alien crash site, because you will be able to research and use it. However, this doesn't mean that your team will be able to use or manufacture items lower in the chain (ie. the laser pistol).

It's advisable to increase your base's lab space and scientist compliment early in the game, because before you know it you'll have to start making difficult decisions about what to research and what to ignore. Though it's good to have the best weapons, you won't be able to utilise them effectively unless your scientists have a good understanding of the alien anatomy.

Anyway, here's a damned handy 'Research Tree' showing which paths of research lead to which discoveries, along with their ultimate results.

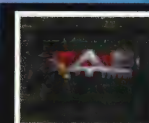
RESEARCH KEY

Research Topic
(Other pre-requisites required for research)
*Item or Information available after research.

Laser Weapons



Laser Pistol
*Laser Pistol



Laser Rifle
*Laser Rifle

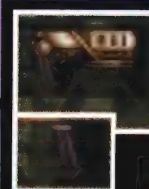


Plasma Pistol
*Plasma Pistol
Plasma Pistol Clip
*Plasma Pistol Clip

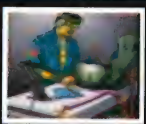
(Elerium-115)



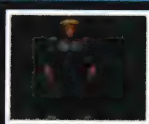
Plasma Rifle
*Plasma Rifle
Plasma Rifle Clip
*Plasma Rifle Clip



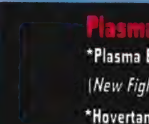
Heavy Plasma
*Heavy Plasma
Heavy Plasma Clip
*Heavy Plasma Clip



Alien Alloys
*Alien Alloys



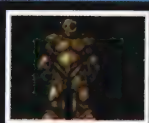
Personal Armour
*Personal Armour



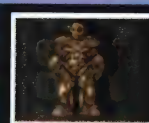
Plasma Cannon
*Plasma Beam
(New Fighter Craft)
*Hovortank Plasma



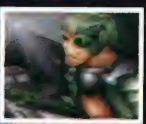
Elerium-115



Power Suit
(Alien Alloys)
*Power Suit



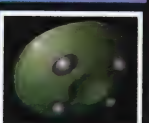
Flying Suit
*Flying Suit



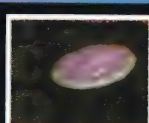
UFO Navigation
*UFO Navigation



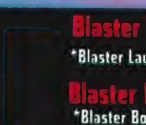
UFO Power Source
*UFO Power Source



UFO Construction
(Alien Alloys)
(Elerium-115)



New Fighter Craft
*Firestorm



Blaster Launcher
*Blaster Launcher

Blaster Bomb
*Blaster Bomb (Elerium-115)



Fusion Missile
*Fusion Missile



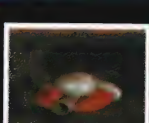
Fusion Ball
*Fusion Ball



Motion Scanner
*Motion Scanner



Medikit
*Medikit



Hovortank/Launcher
HWP Fusion Bomb
*Hovortank/Launcher
*HWP Fusion Bomb





Alien Interrogation

Alien Origins (1)

Alien Mission Data

Alien Engineer Interrogation

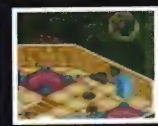
*UFO/Base Data (2)

Alien Medic Interrogation

*Autopsy Data

or

*Autopsy Race Data (3)



Hyper-wave Decoder

*Hyper-wave Decoder



Mind Shield

*Mind Shield



Psi Amp

*Psi Amp

Laser Cannon

*Laser Cannon
*Tank /Laser Cannon

Laser Defences



Plasma Defences

*Plasma Defences



New Fighter-Transporter

*Lightning



Ultimate Craft

*Avenger



Grav Shield

*Grav Shield



Sectoid Leader/Ethereal Interrogation



Psi Lab

*Psi Lab

Alien Leader Interrogation

The Martian Solution

(Alien Harvest)

Cydonia or Bust

(2nd Leader Interrogation)

Alien Autopsy

*Alien Autopsy



Alien Grenade

(Elerium-119)

*Alien Grenade



Small Launcher

(Elerium-119)

*Small Launcher

*Stun Bombs

Alien Artifacts

*Artifacts Info (4)

Matt B

ROCKET LAUNCHER

RIGHT SHOULDER

LEFT SHOULDER

BACK PACK

RIGHT HAND

LEFT HAND

RIGHT LEG

LEFT LEG

GROUND

BELT

AMMO:
ROUNDS
LEFT=1



(1) When an alien race is interrogated for the first time, Alien Data on that race is also received. (2) Captured engineers give information on the type of UFO or base where they were stationed. (3) Alien Medics provide Alien Data on their own race, as well as Alien or Autopsy Data for one other race. (4) Alien Artifacts include: Alien Food; Alien Entertainment; Alien Reproduction; Alien Surgery and Examination Room.

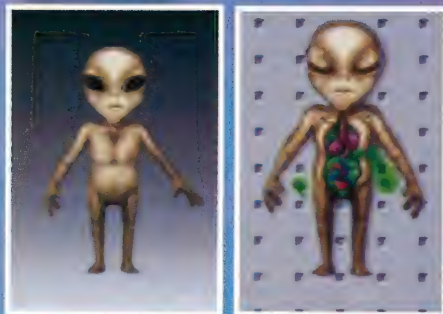


X-COM

ENEMY UNKNOWN

ALIEN PROFILES

SECTOID



Initially, these 'Roswell-types' are the most frequent gits to pop up, and though often stupid, should not be underestimated. The Sektoids' main alien duties appear to be the capture and mutilation of Earth livestock (must work part-time for the major fast food burger chains) although this 'harvesting' activity sometimes extends to any humans unfortunate enough to walk in at the wrong moment. Their relatively simple anatomy and internal organs seems to suggest that they are genetically engineered, while their webbed hands and feet hint at an aquatic origin.

With them being such a boggle-eyed race it's hardly surprising to find that they have exceptional sight, augmented by a high degree of night-vision, and although their natural armour varies somewhat between the different classes, all Sektoids are equally affected by every form of weaponry and ammunition. It's also worth noting that the Sektoid brain is actually highly developed, and the leaders and commanders of the race possess strong psionic capabilities.

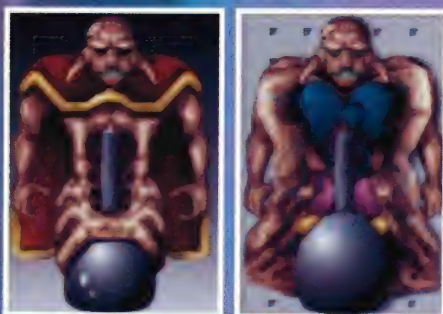
SNAKEMAN



Snakemen appear to have no other purpose than to terrorise humans and carry out military objectives. It comes no surprise, then, to find that these strange part-

reptile part-humanoid lifeforms are commonly found at both terror sites and, occasionally, raids on X-COM bases. Autopsies show that the Snakeman's vital organs are protected within the armoured muscular 'foot' and that, because of this species' tough, scale-covered skin, it appears to have substantial resistance to incendiary ammunition and fire. All other types of weapon, however, effect normal damage.

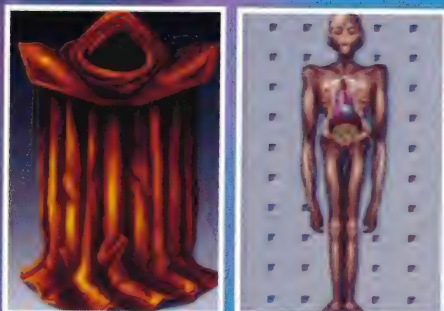
FLOATER



Another regular at terror sites, the Floaters have built-in anti-gravity units allowing them the advantage of instant flight. Fortunately, this species' unique ability is accompanied by a low strength rating and no psionic ability. Autopsy shows that the Floaters have suffered worse from genetic alteration, with their entire lower body being removed and replaced with the anti-gravity device, which also acts as a life-support. Their brains are smaller than human, but they still possess average intelligence along with genetically enhanced physical capabilities.

Floaters do not possess any special weakness to any particular weapon or ammunition type. They are also frequently encountered with Reapers, which are deployed and directed by the Floaters. [See also Reapers].

ETHEREAL

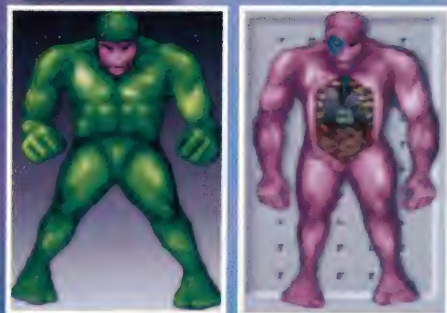


The Ethereals are easily the most remarkable of all the alien life forms found in X-COM. Autopsies have shown that the actual

physical structure of the species is an almost unbelievably retarded and incapable system, with the brain being the only fully developed organ in the body. This, however, is why the Ethereals are among the most formidable opponents you'll encounter, with awesome mental abilities far beyond that of any other specials known. These powers are used for communication between Ethereals and other alien species, along with telekinetic activities such as flying.

The Ethereals are the highest-ranking and most intelligent of the aliens, generally preferring to plan and control operations away from the battle lines. However, when they are involved in combat, even the lowliest soldier has psionic attack capabilities. It appears that their strong telekinetic power allows them to function physically with such a under-developed structure, and in combat they appear no more vulnerable to attack than the larger aliens. They also seem able to offer stronger resistance to stunning tactics.

MUTON



The Mutons are nothing more than walking brick shithouses, and as such should be run away from at the earliest opportunity. Well actually, that's not entirely true, but where the Ethereals are the brains of the aliens' operation, the Mutons are most definitely the brawn. Their only purpose in life is to beat people up, and with a large number of cybernetic implants throughout various parts of their bodies, they are among the most difficult to kill. However, they seem to rely very heavily on telepathic links with the Ethereals for guidance, and evidence has shown that if this link is broken, their mental system actually begins to break down, with the Muton ultimately dying (so get to any Ethereals first to improve the odds).

As if these buggers weren't already hard enough, they also have a heavy, protective layer of organically based armour grafted directly on top of their natural skin. Apart from adding to their excellent physical condition, this also greatly reduces the effect of armour-piercing ammunition. Mutons are the alien race most susceptible to psionic attacks.



SO THERE YOU ARE. ARMED WITH YOUR NEW KNOWLEDGE (AND ABOUT SIXTEEN GRENADES) GET THE CHAPS TOGETHER, FLAG DOWN A NUMBER 64 BUS, AND LET'S ROCK!

REAPER



Reapers are huge hulking creatures (taking up four squares-worth of space) and though only possessing rudimentary animal intelligence, are generally accompanied by Floater 'Masters'. Among the most aggressive aliens, they have no method of ranged attack, but are extremely powerful in close combat, and, with two brains and two hearts, frighteningly resilient.

Fortunately, because of the Reapers' size and general shagginess, they are not only slow and easy to get away from, but their size makes them an easy target, and one particularly susceptible to incendiary ammunition and fire.

CHRYSSALID



These massive crab-like aliens are strong, fast, and generally found in the company of Snakemen. Though they possess combat skills (and will even attack tanks on occasion) they are more even more dangerous than usual opponents simply because they don't kill humans outright. Instead they inject them with a powerful toxin that effectively turns the victim into a Zombie [see elsewhere]. At the same time, the Chryssalid lays an egg inside the body of its victim and, if the Zombie is still alive several turns later, the egg hatches, killing the Zombie but giving birth to a new Chryssalid. Bloody hell.

The best way to counter Chryssalids is to use flying suits and keep your soldiers out of their way. Unfortunately this does nothing for the potential Chryssalids that humans at terror sites provide, who therefore must be well protected. The aliens' shell-like skin acts as a fairly efficient armour, but they do seem particularly vulnerable to incendiary ammunition. They're also quite susceptible to stun weapons.

ZOMBIE

Zombies are among the most aggressive creatures found in X-COM. They rarely run away from a battle, and thanks to their high bravery rating almost never panic or go berserk. Fortunately, Zombies have a relatively small amount of movement points, no way to attack from a distance, and no psionic abilities. That said, they are able to block most psionic attacks against them, and due to their physical nature they cannot be stunned, and take reduced damage with weapons other than incendiary-based.

Zombies are unique for another reason; they're the only aliens that you won't be pleased about killing. The reason? Well, thanks to those nasty Chryssalids, the moment a Zombie is dispatched, any Chryssalid embryos that have been developing will hatch and attack you. This is even worse if you've just used all your movement points to kill the Zombie!

The best way to approach Zombies is to try and stop them happening in the first place. The moment you enter a situation where Chryssalids are present, hunt them down before they can get to any of your troops or civilians.

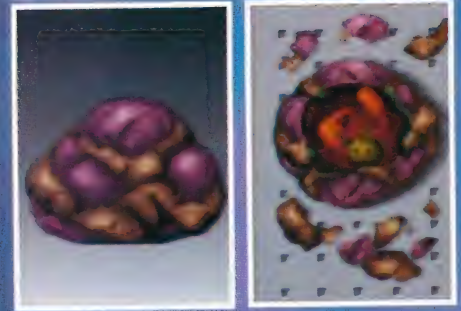
SECTOPOD



Sectopods are not so much aliens as alien constructs. Heavily armed and heavily armoured, these beam laser-toting buggers are controlled by a telepathic link with the Ethereals. The thick alloy coating on the Sectopods' surface makes them particularly resistant to plasma and high explosive

attacks, but thanks to a defect in the robot's sensory equipment, laser attacks are more effective than usual.

SILACOID



These rather nasty silicon-based life-forms are generally seen in the service of the Muton race, and appear to be controlled via telepathy and cybernetic implants.

Silacoids have no ranged attack, but have an extremely hard rock-like skin and a very hot core system. It appears to digest rocks and other ground objects it passes over, using its unique muscular system to both crush objects and propel itself at high speeds. Due to its incredibly hot metabolism, incendiary ammunition has no effect on this creature, although they appear to be highly susceptible to high-explosives.

CELATID

These strange little blobs are incredibly unusual, possessing the ability to float above the ground and track human brain waves. This means that it's not unusual to find a Celatid homing in on soldiers before the target is in the creature's line of 'sight'.

The largest organ in this creature's unusual body is a venom sac that enables the Celatid to spit at its victims with great accuracy using a highly corrosive acid. This acid is so powerful that it's able to kill unarmoured beings with a single hit, but even the lowest class of armour greatly reduces this problem.





FEATURE



DOOM

We were all trembling when it came into the office. As the CD was put in the PlayStation someone bolted for the door screaming. The lid was shut. The machine was turned on. And then in the sudden unerving silence, the title screen appeared: DOOM. PlayStation Plus takes the first tentative steps into the hellish world of Id and what is said to be the ultimate conversion of their nightmarish game...

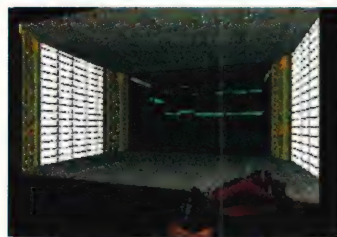
RELEASE	JANUARY
PRICE	TBA
BY	Id
PLAYERS	1-2
GENRE	SHOOT 'EM UP

Doom is what you might call the last chance cafe. Set in a purgatorial underworld, it's the kind of place that tests whether you're fit to join the great choir in the sky or destined for the great barbecue beneath your feet. Admittedly the odds are stacked against you, what with fifty labyrinthian levels to complete and legions of Satan's henchmen filling out the darkness. But it's not all doom and gloom – divine intervention has seen to it that you've got plenty of weapons, and the Big Man with the long white beard has thrown in maps and the occasional first aid kit to help you out.

To throw you right into the heart of the nightmare, *Doom* is shot from a first person perspective. Add to this the amazing 3D graphics and as much violence as the average psychopath could stomach for a lifetime and you're starting to get the idea of what to expect. What you didn't expect, however, was Id's fancy coding ideas which add new graphical delights to the existing Doomiverse, with transparent demons running down light-sourced corridors PC owners could only dream of.

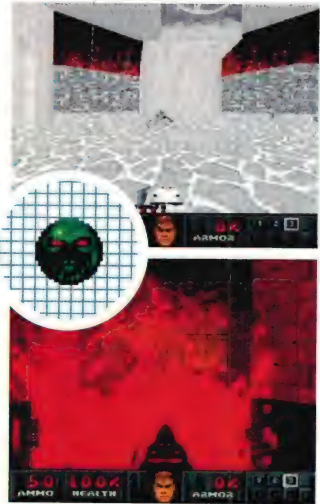
Now you have to ask yourself a last chance kind of question: do I have guts and guns enough to get me to Heaven, or will they be ripped out in the pits of Hell? Of course, you'll only know the answer when you find yourself floating skywards on a made-to-measure cloud or, alternatively, heading downstairs with a pack of charcoal briquettes.





CHECK FOR...

One of the very rare and very special power-ups worth trying to hunt down in *Doom* is invincibility. When in use, the screen turns a blinding white and you're free to go anywhere without enemies laying a greasy claw on you. Also, look out for the teleport ability which appears on certain levels enabling you to switch from one place to another in a blaze of flames.

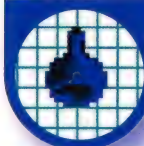


STEPPING TENTATIVELY PAST ANOTHER DEAD BODY.



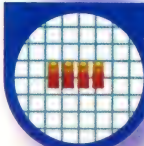
GOD'S GIFTS

It has been said that a shoot 'em up without power-ups is like Wayne Sleep without tights: useless. Thus, *Doom* is a veritable dancer.



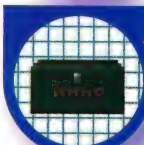
HEALTH BOTTLE

Restores a modicum of health.



CARTRIDGES

Ammo for your single or double-barrel shotgun



AMMO CASE

This allows you to store even more ammo.



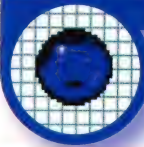
GUN CLIP

Ammo for your revolver.



RADIATION SUIT

Wearing this protects you from radiation contamination.



SOUL SPHERE

Boosts your health to 200%.

DOOM-LADEN SUCCESS

PC owners are no strangers to *Doom*. In fact it proved so popular on the PC that fans soon starting adding touches of their own and inventing whole new levels. The sequel didn't have quite the



PLASMA RIFLE: Releasing a powerful stream of electric rays, the plasma rifle is one of the most powerful weapons in the game. It's just the sort of thing you want to be packing when you come face to face with a Baron of Hell or Cyber Demon.



CHAIN SAW: The most elusive weapon of them all, probably because it's such a joy to use. Carving up demons has rarely looked so realistically gut-churning and satisfying. Getting hold of a chain saw usually involves finding secret rooms and solving puzzles.



CHAIN GUN: Hmmm. When this baby starts whirling you know you're in for a good time. Ideal for mowing down opposition *en masse*, the chain gun eats up ammo fast but it's worth it just for the tomato sauce extravaganza that ensues.

THE KILLOGS VARIETY PACK

In *Doom* there's a weapon for every day of the week, the only dilemma being which one to choose.

MEDIKIT

Restores your health to maximum levels.



COMBAT ARMOUR

Heavyweight protection against attack.



SECURITY ARMOUR

Lightweight protection against attack.



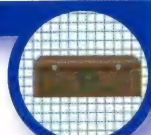
CELPACK

Charges up your plasma rifle.



ROCKET BOX

Ammo for your rocket launcher.



SPIRITUAL ARMOUR

Enables you to boost armour to a potential 200

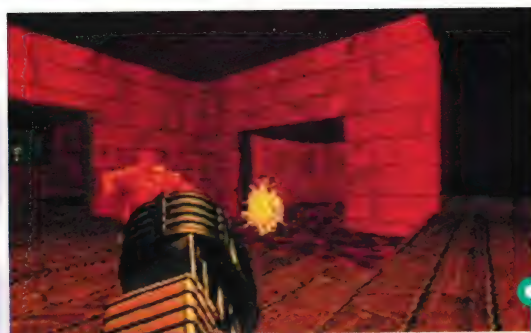


VISOR

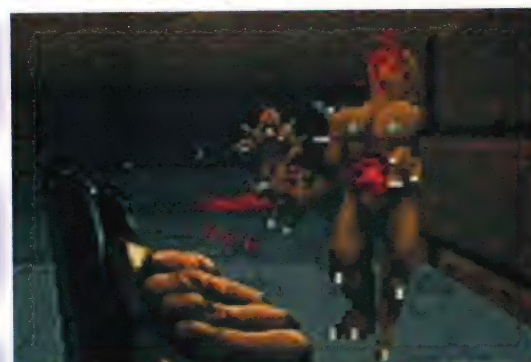
These make it possible to see in the dark.



same impact, largely because it was more of an improvement on the original than a whole new game, but *Doom* remains a benchmark in terms of style and excitement. It has been emulated by a vast number of games ever since – as *Dark Forces*, *Alien Trilogy* and *Descent* are testament...

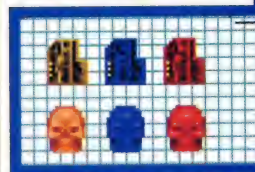
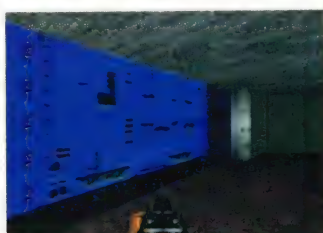


WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH IT'S TIME PULL OUT THE PLASMA RIFLE AND GET GOING.



COLOUR CODED

You can't roam just anywhere in *Doom*, at least not at first. Certain doors only open when you manage to find their corresponding coloured key. There are three different colours in all: red, blue and yellow. Keys tend to be guarded by mobs of demons and often involve figuring out a series of switches in order to gain access to them. Just to make things even tougher they are often hidden in a seemingly out-of-bounds secret room.



SHOTGUN: With the shotgun the weapons start to look a bit more respectable. It still takes two or three shots to kill Imps but Former Soldiers bite the buckshot with a single blast. The shotgun is best used to rip the guts out of an enemy at close range.



FISTS: Not a good idea at all. You'll have problems enough killing these monsters with a full metal jacket, so one puny knuckle duster is going to do little more than give the demonic hordes a few TCP-worthy scratches. Throw punches only as a last resort.



DOUBLE-BARREL SHOTGUN: This little beauty was absent on the PC version but appears on its sequel. I'd have decided to include it on the PlayStation and a good thing too, because it's a very lovely and very powerful piece of hardware. The only drawback is it takes a bit longer to reload.



ROCKET LAUNCHER: Although ammo for the rocket launcher is a bit thin on the ground, it's still one of the best weapons to get your hands on. Its real advantage is that it allows you to destroy enemies from a substantial distance, and normally takes out two or three of them at once.



REVOLVER: The revolver is only really worth using on former soldiers. Even with them you have to pile in the bullets at a super fast rate. There are plenty of gun clips lying around and they are always worth picking up. A revolver is best used to explode barrels near enemies.

LEVEL HEADED

What kind of demon lives in a hell-hole like this?



1. Start by flicking the switch to operate the stone door...



2. ...It rises to reveal a battalion of soldiers...

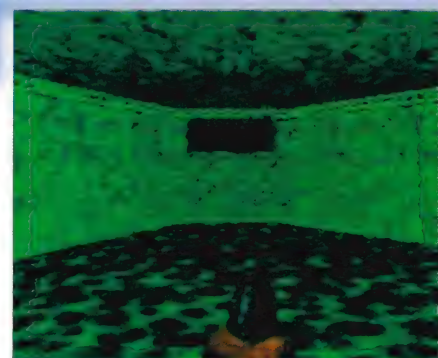


3. ...Shoot barrels between them to set off a chain reaction...



THE GREEN UNCLEAN

There are certain areas in *Doom* bathed in a strange green light. While this might be showing off the state-of-the-art light sourcing techniques, it also denotes that this area is contaminated with radiation. Ordinarily you might decide simply to avoid it, but very often you will have to enter this area in order to pick up a weapon or get through to the exit. Fortunately, there are also radiation suits available on certain levels that give you temporary protection.



14. ...Trapped! Are you doomed?! Probably.



13. ...Time to bottle it as they begin their pursuit...



12. ...They open to reveal two Barons of Hell...

THE GITISH LEGION

Things would be relatively cosy in *Doom* if it wasn't for those pesky legions of Satan determined to see you damned in hellfire for all eternity. Here's a quick look at a selection of these demonic flies in the ointment

FORMER SOLDIER

Although the weakest of your enemies, the former soldier proves all you ever feared about the squaddy mentality.



FORMER SERGEANT

Superior to the Soldier in both rank and strength, the Sergeant doesn't turn up as frequently but makes up for it in aggression.



IMP

These are the Devil's standard henchmen. Tougher than the soldiers, they have a habit of turning up just about everywhere.





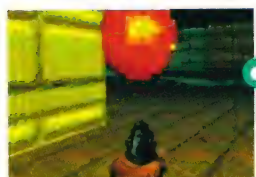
4. ...Now search them for weapons and ammo...



5. ...A quick look at the map reveals a set of stairs...



6. ...Heading down these you come to a door...



SWITCH TO GREEN YOU KILLING MACHINE!

READY YOURSELF FOR THE INCOMING FIRE.



7. ...Beyond it lies an eerie and empty chamber...

TAKE A LEFT AFTER THE ROTTING CORPSES

There's no point asking any of Satan's spawn for directions, unless you'd care to be directed into certain death that is. Instead, make use of the map that tells you where every corridor, secret room and exit is. The map also tells you what colour doors are where, helping you to organise your route depending on the keys you have. What it doesn't do though is tell you where the enemies are, so it's best not to spend too long gawping at it because one could well be crawling up behind you.



8. ...Another look at the map urges you forward...



11. ...You are left facing two doors...



10. ...Step on and it begins to rise...



9. ...You come across another switch...

BULL DEMON

Looking like the Elephant Man on a bad day, bull demons take a few good hits to kill. There are also difficult to see transparent ones.



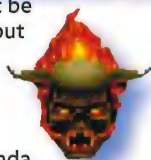
CACODEMON

These cheesy grinned enemies float about spitting hell fire at you. Put them in their place with the help of a shotgun.



LOST SOUL

Lost body might be a better name, but to these floating skulls you're own decapitation is high on the agenda.



BARONS OF HELL

Looking much like minotaurs, catch one of these in a bad mood and you're done for. Pray you have a chain gun on you.





THE EGO OF THE ID

THE HISTORY OF Id...

The Id according to Sigmund Freud, is the instinctive part of the psyche that still has a certain control over us no matter how much faith we put in reason and logic. It must have been this part that John Carmack, John Romero, and Adrian Carmack were using when they decided to set up their very own software company in 1991. They haven't looked back since, and with the release of *Doom* on the PlayStation early next year, instinct suggests they've still got a lot more to look forward to. Here's a brief history of the whirlwind rise of Id software...

The Id story began with the creation of the Commander Keen character in what was to be the first of three adventures, *Invasion of the Vorticons*, released at the end of 1990 by Apogee Software onto shareware. A month later and Id Software was born, and the second in the Commander Keen series, *Goodbye Galaxy!*, quickly established Id as a professional and independent force in the PC software industry.

But it was with *Wolfenstein 3D*, an action packed game where the player takes on the whole Nazi regime, that the Id style began to catch on, gaining a broad following of PC fans. It was also this game that paved the way for the legendary *Doom*, using as it did, 360° environments to create a realistic and very frenetic atmosphere. The success led to the release of *Spear of Destiny* in 1993 which brought the Nazi action epic to the retail shelves.

Now the stage was set for *Doom* which was released at the end of 1993. Since then, millions of shareware copies have been downloaded around the world and more than 150,000 people have registered for the full product. Not only this but *Doom* has now put in appearances on just about every console format, including the blessed PlayStation which also features elements from the sequel *Doom II: Hell on Earth*.

A touch of cashing in on success followed with the release of *Heretic* in December 1994, a game using the *Doom* engine and sharing a similar supernatural combat theme. Id joined forces with Raven Software in the creation of *Heretic* and it is something they plan to do again with the forthcoming release of *Hexen: Beyond Heretic*, the much hyped sequel which claims to be the most realistic and immersive game yet.

And that's Id Software from birth to, well, their toddler years. The youth of the company is in many ways the secret to its success, formed by people with a genuine enthusiasm for games and a real desire to create titles that they themselves want to play. This youthful exuberance would appear to be paying dividends. Let's hope they continue to trust their instincts.



ANSWERS PLEASE...

Jay Wilbur, Id Software's Business Manager.



MB: When did you get involved with Id Software?

JW: 1992. I was unofficially involved from the very beginning. Id began in the house John Carmack and I shared.

MB: And what were the events that led to *Doom*'s creation?

JW: Way back when the guys were working for their old company, they'd started to dabble in 3D games. John Carmack, who's the President of Id Software, is also the head technological force here, and really wanted to do 3D games — he felt that that was the next step forward in gaming (and, apparently, he was right!) He did a few simple games where you were in a polygon tank, and that led to a 'running round a maze' fantasy game. Then, in late 1991, the guys were talking to their friends at Looking Glass Technology, and they were telling them what they were doing with *Ultima Underworld*. The guys thought that they could be doing something similar, and the ideas from that ended up as *Wolfenstein 3D*. That game went more for speed of action than *Ultima*'s more fantasy-based play, and *Wolfenstein* took off for us; it did very well. From that we developed what became *Doom*.

MB: What were you looking for when you sat down to plan *Doom*?

JW: We wanted to better *Wolfenstein*, so we took what we thought worked really well in *Wolf* and then enhanced those elements. Then we took new ideas that we wanted to add — multi-play being a good example.

MB: How similar to your original plans was the final *Doom* product?

JW: If you looked at the very beginning concept against what came out at the end, there's very little that survived. Originally there were going to be space aliens against you, and the name of the game was going to be "It's Green and Pissed". Most game companies would have a "bible" of what to have in a game that some 'suit and tie' developers put down. We, on the other hand, just wanted to make the greatest game in the world, and changed course as necessary as we went along.

MB: As you were putting *Doom* together, did you think you were writing a game that would be so important to the games world?

JW: No. We knew we had a good game. We can look at this thing as say "well this is cool" because first a foremost, we write games because we want to play the games we're writing, but if you ask me if we knew it was going to have such a significant social importance [for entire cultures across the globe?] no, we had no clue that that was coming.

MB: When did you start getting vibes that this was going to be 'fairly big'?

JW: I guess it was about a month or so after *Doom* went out, and all the commotion that surrounded it. We have a press clipping service that sends us any press items concerning Id Software, and if I sent you the book with the first couple of month's worth of clipping for *Doom* and you dropped it on your foot, you'd be off to hospital! Then came the movie deals and the book deals, and stuff like that clued us in.

MB: How does it feel now when you see so many *Doom* clones coming out? Is it funny, or are you just surprised what you've spawned?

JW: I guess it's the sincerest form of flattery, and that's really the way you have to see it. We look forward to the good ones, and as any games players, we despise the bad ones. When one comes along and it's fun to play, hell, we love it.

MB: What do you think it is about *Doom* that clicks with so many people?

JW: I believe the game has a level of immersion far beyond that of any other game. Because it's so easy to play, it appeals to just about everybody. I think it's just one of those games that, well... I'll use a cliché, but you don't play *Doom*, you become one with *Doom*. You know, you sit there paying it, and you duck! Someone fires a missile, and you physically duck! People just scream at the screen.

MB: So what is there to tell about the PlayStation version of *Doom*?

JW: Unfortunately, it's one of those games you've got to see to believe, but I'll attempt to do it justice in words. Williams Entertainment is the group that was commissioned to do the port — and we're familiar with Williams from the *Mortal Kombat* series, so they're a high quality group — and part of the agreement was that they had to do a new soundtrack and new sound effects. These are absolutely awesome. Visually, the Williams guys took advantage of every hardware trick the PlayStation has to offer. In the original *Doom*, the ambient lights were believable, but the effect was not a true to life lighting model. In the PlayStation version, the ambient lighting levels are much more 'real'. If, for instance, you have a white overhead light shining down onto a puddle of green fluid, if you stand over that puddle, your gun will take on a reflected green tint. Monsters that walk into that area will take on a green hue. There was a pink monster in the PC *Doom* that had an invisible version. In the PlayStation game, we have a truly translucent version which we can then add hues to, so we have these tinted but transparent monsters running around, and they look awesome.

MB: I know generally you work to the rule of "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" but it must be tempting to keep adding stuff, no?

JW: Well you know we've never ever ever allowed anyone to change *Doom*. Whenever other ports come out, we just don't allow it, but the guys at Williams put some new secret bits in that we just loved. For the first time ever, we've allowed them to do two new secret levels. I'm not going to tell you about them, but they're insane! They're hilarious.

MB: And what about the elements from *Doom 2*?

JW: Well the PlayStation version of *Doom* is a mixture of 1 and 2. So it's the best of both as far as levels and monsters and weapons go. You'll be playing *Doom 1* levels with a double shotgun.

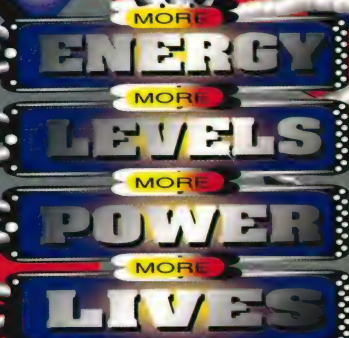
MB: So will we see *Doom 2* released on the PlayStation as a separate game?

JW: No, but you'll be seeing lots more stuff from us on PlayStation. The way we work is to develop on the PC first and foremost, and then port the other versions from there. We're currently talking to Sony and working to get the PlayStation development stuff in-house here, and we're looking at doing a port of *Quake* [the next *Doom* game] in-house. To be honest, we don't know what Nintendo have up their sleeves with the Ultra 64, but today we're jazzed about the PlayStation.

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Jumping Flash
Select any world. Plus super high jump.

Tekken
Select all extra hidden fighters. (See example)
Crime Crackers
All three characters have extra energy. All keys, weapons & other items. 65535 Super bomb!
Kings Field
All weapons activated and extra power.



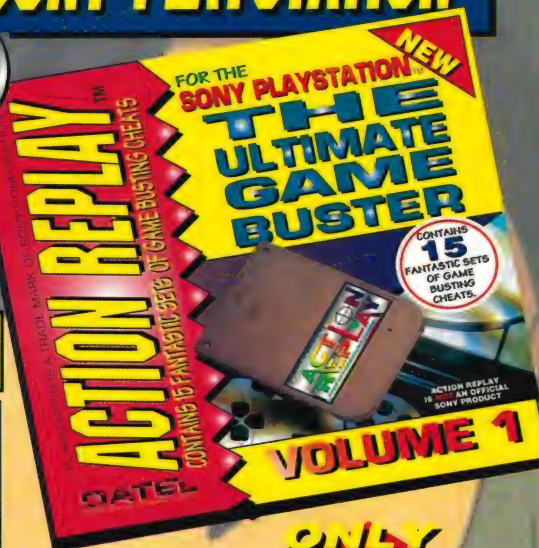
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PLUS POINTS



Well, it seems we're doing something right, as the mailbag has been stuffed with praise, people spotting it wasn't Ipswich in the footy feature, and stupid twats wondering what's better: the Saturn or the PlayStation, or whether you can be the 'boss' in *Mortal Kombat III*. Ah well, such is life's great pattern and all that. Onwards to the mail then...

Send your views and questions to:
**Plus Points,
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London,
EC1R 3AU**

YOU'RE GONNA GET YOUR...

Excellent magazine, clear pictures, informative views and not aimed at the young market — keep up the good work. And now a couple of questions about the PlayStation.

1. Do you get a full-screen picture through the RF cable?
2. It plays music CDs, but how and

can it play photo-CDs and film CDs? One final problem with the mag, though. On page 31 of the football feature, the pictures of Liverpool Vs West Ham are wrong. A couple of clues should have given this away: 1. Too many people for a West Ham game. 2. Not enough pickpocket Scousers to be a Liverpool home game. As such, it can only be Aston Villa Vs Liverpool, September 19th 1992 — Dean Saunders' Villa debut, where he scored twice as Villa beat the press' favourite 4-2. And you say you're a West Ham fan.

A.J. Beaman, Redditch

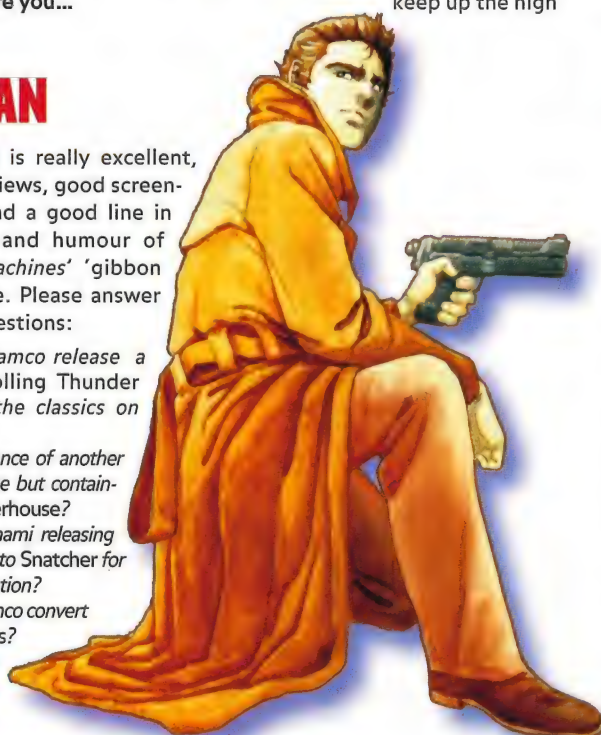
Yes to full-screen, and there will be a special add-on will enable the PlayStation to play both films and photo-CDs, but I'd worry more about the Liverpoolians about to come and kick your head in if I were you...

GROAN

The mag is really excellent, good reviews, good screenshots, and a good line in dry wit and humour of *Mean Machines'* 'gibbon bar' style. Please answer these questions:

1. Will Namco release a Super Rolling Thunder with all the classics on one CD?
2. Any chance of another of the same but containing Splatterhouse?
3. Are Konami releasing the sequel to *Snatcher* for the PlayStation?
4. Will Namco convert *Cyberbikes*?

**Andy Marshall,
Longton**



Namco have yet to confirm any of the above, but *Cyberbikes* is the most likely candidate. And Konami have a Japanese version of *Snatcher* in the offing, but no plans for a sequel or indeed a conversion of the original in the UK as of yet. And what the hell is 'gibbon bar' humour? Jeez, it's like comparing Frank Skinner to bloody Little and Large.

SIGH

I have just finished reading through your fab new mag, and what can I say? Brilliantly put together, spot-on advice, fantastic previews, news and reviews! I think a big well done is deserved to all the crew, and that you must keep up the high

standard you have set. You have all convinced me to get a PAL PlayStation and you were right again: the Saturn sucks. I have been a follower ever since the Master System came out, but this is Sega's wrong move. Long live the PlayStation and long live PlayStation Plus!

Henry Johnson



All that money Sega spent on promoting the Saturn, and some people still can't spell its name properly...

ASK A SILLY QUESTION...

Let me begin with the usual 'verbal arse-licking', accustomed to such letters. Congratulations on an informative and entertaining magazine. Furthermore, thank you Sony for developing a mind-blowing machine. I still remember the days of the Commodore 64, and would never have thought such technology was possible in such a small console. I have not yet bought a PlayStation, as I need a few answers to the following before I commit 100%.

1. How does the PlayStation compare with similar machines on a technical basis? For example, the Saturn, the Jaguar and the other machines coming out?
2. When is the best time to buy a PlayStation? Will there be better deals, with free games and cheaper prices towards Christmas?

3. What else is the PlayStation capable of? Can you play MPEG movies, or is it solely a hard-core games machine?

F.D. Sinepag Ralaevahi

The PlayStation is on par with the Saturn, but more people are supporting the Sony machine. Yes, you can play movies – and use a mouse.

PEDANT

First I wish to congratulate you on your most excellent magazine. But please could you tell me why there is a tiny picture of a fly printed on page 46. Could it be that you're going to have a 'Spot The Fly' competition every month, with a few goodies given to the first person to spot it?

Michele Rollit

Bugger, we've been rumbled about the fly.

GET WITH IT, DADDIO...

I'm probably one of your older readers (35+), and have been into computers since the ZX81 and through to the Amiga. Funnily enough, I haven't played games for around two years, as I was into all things techie – ray-tracing, video, image processing, etc, but I'd noticed mags mentioning these new consoles (I've never owned a console in my life). Then, on a recent exercise at a local arcade, these new arcade machines showed me what was possible, and I remembered bits I'd read about the PlayStation, went to the newsagents and bought your mag. The rest, as they say, is history.

Now for my suggestions and techie bits. A letters page for

general reader views, a cover-mounted CD if possible, and a box-out detailing if items such as the mouse are compatible with a game within its review. Finally, a few questions:

1. What is the screen resolution of the PlayStation?
2. Is the SCART cable RGB or Composite?
3. Does the SCART have auto-switch over as my remote for the TV has gone missing?
4. Will game prices drop?
5. Do import machines accept UK games?
6. Will Konix bring out a six-button Speed King as I cannot get on with the supplied pads?
7. Why no bundled games?
8. Are they converting the Desert Tank coin-op to the PlayStation?

Dave West, Sunderland

The only reason we didn't put a letters page in the first issue was because we didn't want to make up 'hilarious' letters from the likes of Messrs Hugh Janus and Hugh Jardon, or Don Kiddick. Snore. A cover-mounted CD is being investigated, and if a game has special capabilities regarding hardware support, we'll let you know. We're good like that. As for your questions, the PlayStation's screen resolution is an impressive 640x480 at max. The SCART cable is Composite and, no, it doesn't switch automatically – as far as we've noticed anyway. As far as game prices dropping, it's down to the retailer. No, import games do not work on a PAL machine – and vice versa. No to the Konix, Sony felt a demo CD gave a better overall view of the machine's capabilities, and, no, *Desert Tank* isn't being converted, because Sega wrote the original.

SCREEN SAVER

Well, I'm chuffed! At last, an excellent magazine dedicated to the PlayStation – and what an excellent mag it is, too. I was only considering buying a PlayStation, but after reading your mag I'm definitely getting one! Now, I don't want to moan, but there is something that really worries me and maybe you can clarify it for me and others. It concerns the PAL/NTSC debacle. I'm really

excited about the PlayStation, as it's not every day you get a machine that can do what this baby can. But what's the point of owning this wonder machine when 'us English' gamers have to put up with ugly borders and slower speed?

I feel like we're being short-changed compared to US/Japanese gamers. Is there anything that can be done to lessen or eradicate this



problem? Look at the Jaguar and 3DO: Okay machines with full-screen capabilities thanks to modulators. Why not the PlayStation as well? I hope something can be done because I don't fancy being ripped off and forced to play squashed versions of *Doom*, *MKIII* and, most of all, *Tekken*. Just because Europe isn't seen as an important market to Sony. End of moan, great mag, keep up the good work.

Dave, Merseyside

I hardly think Sony reckon Europe's not an important market. As for PAL screen borders. It depends on where the game was developed. UK-based teams work around the problem admirably – as *WipeOut* is testament – and US or Japanese games pass through Sony's UK offices where such problems are reduced or, if possible, sorted out completely. Whatever, as the machine takes off these problems will soon be eradicated, so don't despair too much – after all, such problems plagued the Super NES, but are virtually non-existent now.

FAIR COMMENT

I've spent the last 48 hours being blown away by the awesome

power of the PS. The demo CD was a wonderful idea and, in my opinion, much better than bundling a single game. *Destruction Derby* and *Loaded* are now high on my wish list!

So, to the point of this letter: I have a number of questions which I hope you will be able to answer. First up, is there likely to be a cover CD on future issues of *PlayStation Plus*? I'd imagine that lots of companies would like to demonstrate their wares in one form or another and, unless the licence to produce such discs was very expensive, I would expect the cover price might rise to only five or six pounds. Apart from games and educational demos, I'd imagine that variations on the V-CD theme wouldn't be a waste of space, and maybe some more digital effects for audio CDs (if any more than the standard Studio, Church, etc, were possible).

Is the PS capable of playing MPEG video? Is this the same as the Video-CD standard, and does this mean the PS will be able to play Video-CDs? If the capability is there but untapped, would it be possible to write a program – like the V-CD on the demo disc – that enabled this? Alternatively, this would be a great program for a cover CD.

My final question is about getting a much clearer picture: is it possible to connect the PS to an RGB monitor? If so, I expect it would need to be a video monitor, like the Phillips CM8833 I use with my Amiga.

To balance the questions a bit, I have a small suggestion. Static screenshots can be very misleading for some games. A particular example is *Loaded*, which doesn't look like much, until you're playing it. Maybe you could show a small sequence of frames which showed how the screen changes to better effect. Something like your *Destruction Derby* action replay, only with fewer frames and closer together in duration. It would be very helpful for those games where a static picture is not enough.

Finally, sometimes the pages are a bit too shiny and the screenshots are a little dark. In any case, I'm looking forward to next issue.

Jason Hulance, Bicester

As stated earlier, we're looking into the logistics of a cover-mounted CD, but would want to ensure it was crammed with stuff to warrant a price rise to the five quid region. As for your RGB comment, we've tried it with varying degrees of success but your best bet is to go for the SCART option which gives the best possible picture quality with a minimum of fuss.

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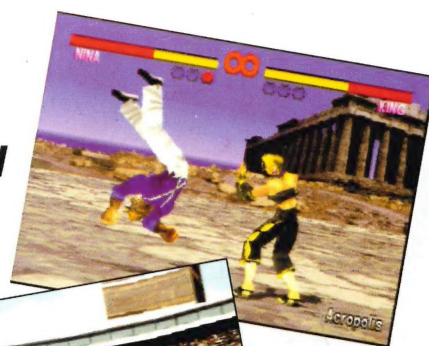
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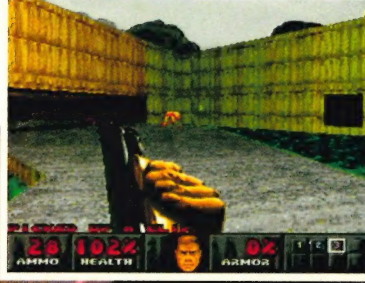
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DOOM



DESCENT

